

China to open its doors to technology from West

In an important statement on economic policy, the Chinese leadership has promised to open the country's doors to the rest of the world, expanding trade and making use of the advanced technology of other nations. The statement emphasizes the role of scientific research and confirms the impression that the new Politburo under Chairman Hua is more interested in results than ideology.

New Politburo puts emphasis on results

Hong Kong, Sept 12.—China promised today to open its doors to the rest of the world. An economic policy statement issued by the State Planning Commission declared: "We must expand our economic, technical and cultural exchange with other countries on the principle of equality, mutual benefit and one supplying what the other needs. We must learn from the good experience of other countries and combine this with our own originality."

The advanced technology of other countries was required to meet China's needs "not to hinder but to promote our own creativity, not to weaken but to increase our ability to develop our national economy and achieve modernization independently."

Only those more decadent and reactionary ruling classes close their doors and reject any good things from other lands.

—Agence France Presse.

David Bousavina, writing from Hong Kong: "The State Planning Commission is directed by Mr. Yu Chih-wei, who was recently admitted to the Politburo."

Its long statement published today contains extensive guidelines for the nation's economic administrators, with the emphasis on production rather than ideology.

It recalls that in his lifetime Mao Tse-tung had particularly praised the Minister of Oil Production. This is seen as an indication that China will in the future pursue an aggressive petroleum-importing policy.

The commission's statement also speaks of the importance of science and technology in the development of the economy, and blamed the so-called "Gang of Four" for the stagnation of these sectors in the recent past.

It confirms the impression that the new Politburo under Chairman Hua Kuo-feng is interested in results more than ideology. The key figure

Another deadline for Schleyer deal

From Patricia Clough

Bonn, Sept 12.—The life of Dr. Hans-Martin Schleyer, the kidnapped president of the West German Industries' Federation, seemed to be hanging in the balance today as the crisis committee of Government, Opposition and Land-leaders met.

A telephone caller purporting to speak for the kidnappers told a Bonn news agency office that the deadline for saving Dr Schleyer's life by freeing 11 jailed terrorists was set for midnight tonight. It was the latest of a series of deadlines which have so far been passed as the Government plays for time.

The fall committee, set up to spread the responsibility for decisions such as the one now facing the Government, had not met since last Tuesday, the night after Dr. Schleyer was kidnapped in a Cologne street.

The politicians are aware that the majority of West German

Overdrafts cheaper as banks cut base rate

By Ronald Pullen

Pressure on the building societies for an early reduction in the mortgage interest rate mounted yesterday as a result of the banks' decision to cut a full point off their base rate to 7 per cent.

It was the ninth cut in base rates this year and was set in motion after Friday's bigger-than-expected drop in the Bank of England's minimum lending rate (MLR) by half a point to 6 per cent.

The overdraft rate is now exactly half the level in force at the turn of the year. Prime industrial borrowers will be charged 8 per cent and personal rates will vary between 10 and 12 per cent.

To protect the clearing banks' level of profitability, as well as to expose the out-of-line building society deposit rates have become, the banks are also to trim their deposit rates by a full one point.

The banks have seen a steady outflow of deposit account money, with building societies offering investors a grossed-up rate of just over 10 per cent and despite a recent one-point cut to 9 per cent in the National Savings rate. But the banks are confident that most of the deposit account funds likely to move have now gone.

Building societies responded yesterday with characteristic caution. A spokesman for the Building Societies Association said the cut "helps the prospects of a reduction in the rates charged to home buyers".

Privately, however, many building society chiefs regard a cut in the mortgage rate as inevitable and the only question is whether they have the headroom to trim more than half a point from the present 10 per cent level.

The association emphasized

that the level of receipts was the main factor in determining interest rates. In August, receipts were about £50m below the societies' target of £500m a month to maintain new advances of around £500m a month, although early returns for September suggest some improvement.

The next meeting of the association to discuss rates is not due to be held until September 23, which means the earliest time a new rate structure could be implemented would be the beginning of October.

Yesterday's fall in bank base rates, led by Barclays, raises the standard of living in China. It has been too much subordinated to dispersed capital investment and to Marxist theory.

Peking: "The most important Chinese communist military delegation yet to visit a Western country left for France today."

During the 10-day visit the Chinese will meet M. Barre, the French Prime Minister, and M. Bourges, the Defence Minister. They will also hold talks with the French armed forces' general staff. —Agence France Presse.

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HOME NEWS

Minister promises talks on warning cards for medicine

From John Roper
Health Services Correspondent

A system of warning cards or leaflets giving patients clear instructions on how to take prescribed medicines is to be discussed with doctors and chemists and the Health Education Council. Mr Moyle, Minister of State for Health, said yesterday.

He was speaking at the opening session of the British Pharmaceutical Conference at Sheffield. He said it was important that patients should take the recommended doses at the correct times and should complete the course of treatment. But that was not as simple as might be thought.

There was evidence that many patients did not follow their doctors' instructions because they forgot them, or did not understand them in the first place. Confusion was more likely when the patient had more than one prescription, was elderly, or had of hearing.

Patients should be warned about predictable and avoidable side-effects. Interaction between drugs, between medicines and foods or alcohol, and the safety of drugs in pregnancy, were also matters for concern.

Any scheme would have to ensure that doctors were familiar with the contents of the leaflets and could show on the prescription whether the patient should receive written information.

At present, medicines are given to patients usually with little information other than the name of the drug, and brief instructions about the dosage to be taken.

Referring to growing concern about the number of pharmacies that are closing, Mr Moyle said it was clear that the decline could not be allowed to continue at the present rate. Some measure of planned distribution might help but it seemed clear that more must be done to meet the financial difficulties of the smaller, more vulnerable pharmacies.

In her presidential address, Mrs Esme Leigh said that medical services might cease unless the Government took



A photograph of Mary Bell, who absconded on Sunday from Moor Court open prison, Stoke-on-Trent, taken by her mother when she was 16.

Councils to run new towns' homes

By Our Planning Reporter

Nearly 30,000 rented houses in the new towns of Crawley, Hemel Hempstead, Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield will be transferred to local authorities on April 1 next. The councils concerned will also take over more than 30 local shopping centres, 21 public houses and 65 community buildings.

The properties belong to the Commission for the New Towns, which as Mr Shore, Secretary of State for the Environment, told the Commons last April, is to end its housing role. Some 150,000 state will move to towns with local authorities, and the commission will in future be primarily responsible for managing publicly funded commercial and industrial estates.

Forces in Germany may get allowances cut

By Our Political Correspondent

Conservative backbenchers are being alerted to take vigorous action in Parliament in protest against a government proposal to cut allowances to Army and RAF units in Germany.

Mr Philip Goodhart, MP for Bromley, Beckenham, vice-chairman of the party's defence committee, said yesterday that 55,000 British soldiers and air-

men in Germany faced the probability of a big pay cut in the next few months.

"If a cut of anything like 40 per cent in the local overseas allowance is implemented the effect on morale will be disastrous", he said. "If there is any cut in take-home pay, many senior NCOs can be expected to leave the Forces, particularly in the RAF."

Mr Goodhart said that in Germany, between a third and half of the average Service-man's take-home pay consists of the local overseas allowance.

Official nearly hid 'canker' of corruption

Mansel Mathews, a local government executive, had nearly succeeded in hiding from the world the canker at the base of 40 years' service, Judge Pitchford said at Cardiff Crown Court yesterday.

In May, Mr Mathews retired as chief executive of Ogwr District Council, Milford Haven, with a lump sum of £8,820 and a pension of £6,000 a year, it was stated. In June he received the Queen's Jubilee medal.

Mr Mathews, of Ewenny, Bridgend, pleaded guilty to corruptly receiving a Mini car valued at £335 from David Norman Jenkins, managing director of a building company, to show his favour in matters relating to the Pen-y-Bont Rural District Council when Mr Mathews was the council's engineer, surveyor and planning officer in May, 1968.

Mr Mathews was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, suspended for 12 months, and ordered to pay fines and costs totalling £6,000.

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Move to improve Scottish industrial relations image

From Our Correspondent

The need to improve the industrial relations image in Scotland was agreed at meetings between three leading Scottish Conservative MPs and the CBI in Glasgow yesterday.

That was stated by Mr Edward Taylor, opposition front bench spokesman for Scottish affairs at a press conference which he held later with Mr George Younger, MP for Ayr, and Mr Alex Fletcher, MP for Edinburgh, North.

Mr Taylor said it was agreed at both meetings that efforts should be made to get the facts on industrial relations in the West of Scotland through to leading industrialists, especially from overseas.

Mr Taylor said that at their meeting with the Scottish TUC all had agreed on the urgency of reducing the level of unemployment and restoring economic confidence and growth.

It was also agreed, he said, that there was as yet much internationalisation as national. In Scotland it had, however, got relatively worse.

All possible steps should be taken to speed the dispersal of Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Overseas development jobs from London to the west of Scotland, he said.

Thirdly, they had agreed on the need for a review of the structure of regional grants. To get the expansion of growth

School breakfast seen as aid to studies

Children might be able to concentrate on their work if they were given breakfast at school, the Association of Assistant Mistresses says in a discussion document published yesterday. It also suggests that an earlier start, possibly at 8 am, might be considered.

Miss Shirley Wood, secretary of the association, which has 38,000 members, said many children arrived at school cold and hungry, having had little or no breakfast, and sometimes after a journey of an hour or more. By 10 am their attention was flagging.

The discussion document was drawn up by the association's education committee. It also agreed on the need for cuts in direct taxation.

Membership campaign: The Labour Party in Scotland hopes to add between 3,000 and 4,000 members to its 74,000 membership in a campaign to be launched this autumn and to continue until the next general election.

Mr George Robertson, chairman of the party in Scotland, described it as the start of a counter-attack by the Labour Party in Scotland and he said he was confident of its success.

The party had ordered 100,000 leaflets, entitled *Together We'll Build the New Scotland*, on which there is a membership form charging each member a "minimum subscription" of £1.20 a year.

Thirdly, they had agreed on the need for a review of the structure of regional grants. To get the expansion of growth

Mr Mason has won respect but devolved government is no nearer

From Christopher Walker
Belfast

A year after his arrival at the Northern Ireland Office, Mr Mason, the Secretary of State, has lost none of his indefatigable self-confidence or flair for publicity. That explains why the normally gloomy corridors of the Parliament buildings at Stormont will echo today with the unfamiliar sounds of celebration.

While his three predecessors may have let such anniversaries pass with little more than a casual aside, Mr Mason intends to mark the occasion with a "birthday lunch" for the press and a speech reviewing events of the past 12 months.

The gesture is typical of the style of a man whose energy and no-nonsense approach have won grudging respect from most sections of the divided community, although they have not yet succeeded in bringing the return of a devolved government any nearer. The festivities will be held in the building that was the base of

previous local administrations. In sharp contrast to Mr Rees, his immediate predecessor, Mr Mason concentrated his efforts on making the undivided system of direct rule as efficient as possible. The words of one local politician he has been particularly singled out for

criticism. Although civil servants were initially sceptical of Mr Mason's methods, his senior advisers have also come round to expressing admiration for the task being performed by the former Ballymena miner. His ability to master complex briefs and to move without serious mishap through the minefield of local prejudices has been particularly singled out for praise.

In reviewing his term of office, it will be surprising if Mr Mason does not concentrate on the Government's successes with the economy and security. Highlights likely to be picked out are the defeat of the "loyalty" strike, the recent royal visit and the £1,000m eco-

nomic measures for boosting industry.

When he arrived in Ulster Mr Mason expressed a reluctance to plunge quickly into what he termed as Northern Ireland's political whirlpool. To press the point home, he insisted on meeting local trade unionists and employers before holding talks with any of the province's seven political

parties.

However, his later success in

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THE BREAD STRIKE

The bakers, members of the Federation of Bakers, apologise to their millions of customers for being unable to provide them with bread this week. This is due to an official strike by the Bakers' Union.

Why is there this serious disruption?

The Union has suddenly said its members should not have to work on Bank Holidays, despite the Agreement to the contrary. It also says its members do not receive adequate pay for working on Bank Holidays.

But very many people accept jobs where they are expected to work "unsocial hours" so that the rest of the population can be properly looked after. This applies to many bakery workers—particularly men producing and packing bread. It seldom applies to women.

Inaccurate and misleading statements have appeared about pay and conditions in the baking industry. These are governed by a National Agreement between the Federation and the Union. It is regularly reviewed.

PAY

The following points are factual:

- * No one over 19—male or female—is paid less than £38 for working 40 hours a week Monday to Friday **on days**. Many women and almost all men receive considerably more even for 40 hours on days.
- * But most men work shifts which involve working Sundays. They also work days and nights in rotation, and overtime. Naturally they receive extra payments for these unsocial hours.
- * The average gross pay for most men is about £70 per week.

BANK HOLIDAYS

- * People who are **required** to work on a Bank Holiday receive **double** their normal pay **PLUS** a day off with pay **or** an additional day's pay. This is almost equivalent to treble pay.
- * People who are **not** required to work on a Bank Holiday receive eight hours pay provided they qualify by working before and after the holiday unless excused. This is a usual qualification in industry and discourages absenteeism at busy holiday periods.
- * People who **refuse** to work on a Bank Holiday when required to do so lose their Bank Holiday pay. This normally affects only a handful of people. But the Union told its members not to work the recent Bank Holiday, so many people forfeited their holiday pay. And they did not qualify for some other special payments. This is all covered in the National Agreement. This is also the reason for the present strike.
- * Those who work on a Bank Holiday of course receive more money than for a normal week.
- * Before the Bank Holiday the employers offered certain improvements and were prepared to discuss others, but the Union still insisted on no work for the last Bank Holiday.
- * The employers have offered to take the dispute to arbitration. The Union has refused. If the Union thinks it has a reasonable case, why not put it to the test of arbitration instead of the test of force?
- * If force is allowed to prevail there will be more frequent bread strikes in the future. And the public must be safeguarded from that, even at the cost of the present.
- * The Bakers' Union has a closed shop in the large bakeries. It has the power to deny bread to the people of England and Wales, and is now exercising that power.
- * Surely such great power should be used only with the utmost responsibility?
- * We hope for an early return to work so that talks can be resumed in a proper atmosphere.

The Federation of Bakers
20 Bedford Square London WC1

HOME NEWS

Lawyers saw anonymity principle in sexual offence cases involving women as the thin end of the wedge

Rape increasing but not at same rate as other violent crime

By Frances Gibb

Eleven hundred rape cases were reported to the police in England and Wales last year. In 1963 there were 422. The number of cases reported in the Metropolitan area rose from 17 in 1953, to 49 in 1963, and to 132 in 1973. Now almost 200 cases are reported each year.

But rape is not increasing at the same rate as the rest of violent crime. Between 1969 and 1973 that rose by three-fifths to about 33,000 cases a year. Rape over the same period rose by about ten to almost a thousand. But there are more rapes than violent deaths. Last year there were 131 reported cases of rape, compared with 145 cases of murder, manslaughter and infanticide.

Rape also forms a higher proportion of the total of sexual offences which have in general been declining. It now accounts for a seventh of the 2,780 cases brought to the higher courts in 1975.

In the United States the increase is rather steeper. Professor James Cameron, of the department of forensic medicine at the London Hospital, cited a fourfold increase in reported cases of rape in the past 10 years.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Americans have initiated the new pressure

groups against rape, and the counselling services. In the past year Britain's first rape crisis centre opened in London. Others are planned in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Bristol, Birmingham and Manchester. The Women against Rape organization has also been founded.

The campaigners define rape widely. The centre says it is any forced or unwanted sexual attention and that most women have experienced it. But even under the accepted definition of rape, which it mandates, only two-fifths of reported rapes (400 in 1975) ever reach the high courts; many cases go unreported.

A large increase is the reporting of cases of rape now likely. Since last year, with the passing of the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act, victims of rape and defendants (until found guilty) have a right to anonymity. The Act also protects women from intensive and on their sexual history, except at a judge's discretion. That was used by the defence to cast doubt on a woman's moral rectitude, and hence, so the argument runs, on the likelihood of her being raped. Both measures are expected to encourage more reporting of cases.

The principle of anonymity was a landmark in criminal law. Mr William Rees Davies QC, Conservative MP for Thanet, West, says it was passed in the face of opposition from the Bar Council and Law Society, who saw it as the thin edge of the wedge. Why should rape victims, they argued, have anonymity and other victims not?

The Act also for the first time introduced a definition of rape. Until then the traditional common law definition, derived from a seventeenth-century writer, was that rape consisted of "having unlawful carnal intercourse with a woman without her consent by force, fear or fraud."

With the Act emerged the definition that a man commits rape if he has sexual intercourse with a woman who at the time did not consent to it and he knew that she did not consent, or was reckless as to whether she consented or not. The emphasis is on lack of consent, not violence.

It incorporates the controversial Law Lords' ruling in DPP v Morgan (1975) that belief in a woman's consent, even if unreasonable, must exonerate the accused person. The case involved a husband, an RAF sergeant, who invited three friends home to have sexual

intercourse with his wife. He told them she would welcome it, although would struggle a little as she was "kinky". The men pleaded belief that she consented, and that therefore there was no intention of rape. Runcifw

The ruling prompted the Government to set up an inquiry on the law of rape under Mrs Justice Heilbron, which reported in December 1975. It did not contest the Law Lords' decision but made recommendations on anonymity, sexual history, and on juries. Both sexes should be represented on the jury, the inquiry said, with not fewer than four of each.

The last proposal was rejected on the ground that it would be administratively difficult. Since then a man recently obtained a jury composed entirely of women by using his right under the present system to object to certain members. He was cleared.

Debate on rape has now shifted from definitions to sentencing. A furor was provoked by the release in June of Mr Tom Holdsworth, a guardsman, who had sexually assaulted a girl of 16 with extreme cruelty. He was given an suspended sentence because of the effect a prison term would have had on his Army career.

Opinion has swung from sentences being too harsh to them being too low. Of 328 men convicted for rape in 1975, 241 were sentenced to imprisonment. Most sentences fell in the 12 to 24 years range, with 58 receiving two to three years, 43 three to four years, 50 four to five years and 34 five to seven years.

The British Academy of Forensic Science has said that conviction for rape should not automatically lead to a prison sentence. A survey last year by the Institute of Psychiatry, London (Soothill, Gibbons, Jack), however, showed that those charged with rape and acquitted were just as likely to commit sexual offences as the whole only to rape and not to other sexual offences.

Women's groups are calling for a wider definition of rape, to include rape within marriage. While supporting that, Mr Ashley, Labour MP for Stoke-on-Trent, introduced a Bill in July to give the prosecution the right of appeal against sentences it thought too lenient in the case of rape and other sexual offences. His Bill was defeated (by 114 votes to 52), because, he argues, MPs thought he was advocating a return of the court's conviction rather than the sentence. He intends to press it in the next session.

"Parliament is out of step with public opinion on this," he says. "I have had a remarkable response of letters in favour of a review. Other countries have the right to appeal, so it is nothing out of place."

Sentencing and the law of rape are under review by the Criminal Law Revision Committee as part of a study on sexual offences. Professor Brian Simpson, who was on the Heilbron committee, argues that that makes more sense than looking at rape law in isolation. It will examine anomalies such as the "anonymity" clauses applying on the whole only to rape and not to other sexual offences.

Women's groups are calling for a wider definition of rape, to include rape within marriage. While supporting that, Mr Ashley will not press for it as it is so far ahead of public opinion about a wife's "duty".

As witnesses (only the Director of Public Prosecutions can bring rape charges) they are not entitled to it. But while, in theory, they are witnesses, in practice they are often themselves on trial without the benefit of counsel.

To be concluded.

More robberies and burglaries as serious crimes increase

By Peter Evans

Home Affairs Correspondent

A sharp rise in indictable offences in England and Wales recorded this year has shattered any hopes that the increase in crime had reached a plateau.

Last year there was a rise of only 1 per cent, compared with one of 7 per cent in 1975. But in the first quarter of 1977 the figures went up by a tenth over the same period last year.

The latest Home Office figures for the second quarter of this year, now disclose that the increase has accelerated to 12 per cent during that period, compared with April to June last year.

The most worrying reversal of the trend then shown in per cent in the same period last year.

The largest percentage increase continues to be in criminal damage offences, which rose by 27 per cent. He thought some may find comfort in a 9 per cent decrease in sexual offences, that figure, like others in the statistics, refers only to those recorded. Others may not be reported.

The total number of indictable offences in the second quarter of this year was 652,300, bringing the figure for the year so far to 1,266,400. More than half are made up of offences of theft and handling stolen goods, reported cases of which rose by only 2 per cent.

Alcoholism showing among 18-year-olds

By a Staff Reporter

The first signs of chronic alcoholism in people aged 18 and 19 are beginning to be noticed, Mr John East, senior adviser on addictions in Hampshire, said yesterday.

He was speaking at the first showing of a film made for showing in schools and aimed at checking drinking among young people. He said that although a figure of 500,000 alcoholics in Britain had been published, he thought the total probably exceeded a million and was rising.

One young addict complains

in the film that advertising "stares you in the face all the time." A doctor describes alcohol as "one of the most poison substances man can take."

Scenes showing an operation for ruptured vessels in the gutters are not easy to watch, but as Mr Ian Dillou, a director of Project Icarus, the Hampshire charity group, said: "The film is not pretty, but nor is the subject."

The film tells through their own mouths the experiences of four men: a former naval rating of 25, a former prisoner of 28, a university graduate of 30 and an anaesthetist in his early forties.

It title, *Goodbye to an Old Friend*, refers to an addict's farewell to addiction. The old friend of the side, the film says, is easy to shake hands with again, as the only hope is to stop drinking altogether.

The film, in colour and running 2 minutes, is intended as a visual aid for teachers and group leaders. It costs £95 to buy.

A campaign costing £175,000 is to be launched in the Northeast by the Health Education Council this year.

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British Rail extends 'saver' fare scheme

By Michael Baily

Transport Correspondent

British Rail is to extend its half-price "Big City Saver" fare after the outstanding success of the pilot London-to-Glasgow scheme earlier this year.

The £15 London-to-Glasgow return (normal single fare £16.50) on specified trains attracted 50,000 extra travellers, doubling the previous traffic level, between March and June, and produced an increase of a fifth in revenue.

Three more schemes will start on October 2: London-Edinburgh, £15 return either direction, overnight only; London-Sheffield/Chesterfield, £7 return either way; Glasgow-East Midlands, £10 return either way (Nottingham, Sheffield, Derby, etc). Children half price.

Mr Humphrey Todd, British

Rail's Inter-City manager, said yesterday: "We are very much aware that some of our fares are becoming prohibitively expensive, simply because of the distance. This scheme demonstrates our belief that long-distance inter-city travel should be by rail. We expect it to generate new traffic."

The scheme marked a new departure in British Rail thinking. Mr Todd said, in that people would be able to travel on the day of their choice provided they used one of the specified trains where traffic was light. For the traveler it did away with the restrictions surrounding other cut-price returns, and for British Rail directed traffic to where space was available, without fear of "abstracting" full-fare traffic.

The scheme will be confined to second-class travel for the time being. The experiment will be for six months, but if successful it will be automatically extended, as the Glasgow one is being from October 2.

British Rail, whose traffic is

7 per cent up so far this year, scheme so long as it adds traffic and revenue.

Mr Todd said: "We feel safer over longer distances: 400 miles between London and Scotland. The Edinburgh scheme is for overnight only because the day trains are better used on the Edinburgh run and we have no empty seats."

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Mr Gierek arrives in Paris for talks on French assistance to Poland and East-West détente

From Charles Hargrove
Paris, Sept 12.

Mr Edward Gierek, the Polish United Workers' Party leader, arrived in Paris on a state visit designed to improve still further the exceptional quality of Franco-Polish relations, and accessibly, détente, and the dialogue between East and West.

Mr and Mrs Gierek, who were invited from the frontier by military aircraft, were welcomed at the airport by President and M. Giscard d'Estaing, and M. Barre, the Prime Minister, with all the protocol due to a head of state.

In reply to his host's speech of welcome M. Gierek said that the Franco-Polish dialogue has turned out to be a fundamental and very constructive element in the development of relations between East and West.

A draft of its report was published between the two countries had served both their mutual interests and the cause of peace on the continent.

The Pofeb leader is anxious for help to tide over Poland's economic difficulties and to obtain greater French assistance, especially in the matter of light industry. Beyond that, disengagement, détente and the coming "fraternal" conference which will be discussed at the two private talks and the private luncheon at Marly, near Paris, on the third day. Other subjects on the agenda will be the North-South dialogue, the Middle-East problem, and the General's autonomous region of Agde, the representatives of the General Committee of Catalonia, and the General's supporters.

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Record voter turnout in Norway elections

From Peter Nichols
Rome, Sept 12.

Signor Andreotti, the Prime Minister, proposes to reply tomorrow to parliamentary questions on the escape of SS Colonel Herbert Kappler, a convicted German war criminal last month from custody in Rome's hospital hospital.

Signor Vito Lattanzio, the Minister of Defence, has so far made two intransigent statements to Parliament on the escape and demands for his resignation have now spread to the Communists. This stiffening of the Communist attitude to the minority Christian Democratic Administration, which they support, is one of the surprises of the day.

The Prime Minister's agreement to give evidence at the trial in Catanzaro arising from a bomb explosion at a bank in Milan seven years ago, will revive at least symbolically the allegations of some degree of political responsibility for the attack.

There are two groups of principal accused, one anarchist and the other of the extreme right. A general and other officers formerly belonging to the secret service are also among the accused.

Signor Andreotti can take the credit for having forced into the open the part played by the secret service in this and other plots involving the extreme right.

He will be in a delicate situation, however, as the first leading politician to give evidence in trial regarded as of crucial significance both for what happened and for the allegations that justice has been hampered for political reasons.

It may be simply a reply to increasing Christian Democratic attacks on them or to criticisms from their own rank and file that they have been too easy with the Christian Democrats now that they are in semi-minority.

In any event, the Prime Minister's political difficulties are increasing around him. Should he have to dispense with the services of Signor Lattanzio, in the interests of the Communists, he will be in a position to demand for a new approach to the deposit.

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All polls agreed that the Labour Party and the Conservatives were likely to make gains in the election result probably depends on the gains or losses registered by their parliamentary allies.

The Labour Party, headed by Mr. Odvar Nordli, the Prime Minister, had 52 of the 155 seats in the outgoing Storting (Parliament) and was allied with the Socialist Left Party with its 16 seats. Ranged against them in the elections is a centre-right coalition of the Conservative, Christian People's and Centre parties.

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OVERSEAS

US Senate committee accused of concealing extent of work by influential journalists for the CIA

From Lance Gay
Washington, Sept 12
The intelligence committee of the United States Senate bowed to pressure from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) last year to conceal the full extent of the role of American journalists in secretly carrying out assignments or giving information to the agency, according to *Rolling Stone* magazine.

Mr Carl Bernstein, one of the reporters who uncovered the Watergate scandal, says that more than 400 American journalists have worked for the CIA in the last 2 years—far more than previously reported.

The story also says that Senator Frank Church's Senate intelligence committee, which looked into CIA connexions with American journalists, was libeled and misrepresented its dimensions after intensive lobbying by the CIA.

Mr Bernstein says that Mr William Colby and Mr George Bush, both former CIA directors, persuaded the committee to restrict its inquiry into the problem and to issue a final report that was couched in "deliberately vague and sometimes misleading terms".

He quotes one unnamed senator as saying that "from the CIA point of view, this was the highest, most sensitive cover programme of all".

Mr Colby, reached in Syracuse, New York, said he had no recollection of any such activity on his part, although he had urged the committee not to publish the names of

journalists who have cooperated with the CIA.

Senator Church, who was flying back to Washington from West Virginia, could not be reached for comment. The allegations brought denials from almost all of the news agencies, most by Mr Bernstein.

The *Rolling Stone* article said that CIA records show that some publishers, important editors and broadcast company officers cooperated with the agency by hiring CIA agents or by instructing their reporters to provide information to the agency, according to *Rolling Stone* magazine.

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According to the *Rolling Stone* article, CIA files on the agency's relationships with American journalists—summaries of which were given to the Senate intelligence committee last year—contain reports of specific tasks undertaken by the *New York Times* columnist C. L. Sulzberger and syndicated columnists Joseph and Stewart Alsop.

"Yes, if you have a chance to help your country, it's your job to do so," Joseph Alsop told a wire service reporter. "I've never taken orders. I've never done anything I haven't believed in."

The *New York Times* has denied being approached by the CIA to the knowledge of its publisher, Mr Richard Salant, president of CBS news, said he has seen no evidence of an arrangement with the intelligence agency, although a CBS spokesman conceded that some of the network's correspondents briefed the CIA in the 1950s: "It was common at the time and all the news media did it—ABC, NBC, *The New York Times*, UPI," he said.

Mr Marvin Zin, a *Time* spokesman, said his company had no evidence that any *Time* correspondent was ever a CIA agent.

Mr H. L. Stevenson, UPI editor-in-chief, said, "On the basis of our own internal investigations, we are satisfied that no current UPI personnel are involved directly or indirectly with the CIA." New

York Times News Service.

Cholera in the path of 3 million pilgrims

Beirut, Sept 12.—A Middle East cholera epidemic has spread to Saudi Arabia as the country prepares to receive an estimated three million Muslim pilgrims in November.

The Saudi Health Ministry announced in a terse statement: "A cholera has crept into the kingdom through the city of Medina from the neighboring countries. A few cases have been reported." Unofficial medical sources reported four or five cases of cholera in northern Saudi Arabia.

Hordes of Muslim will converge on Saudi Arabia when the pilgrimage season starts. They travel by jet, ship, car or foot. The kingdom has been spending vast sums to accommodate the pilgrims and prevent crime, accidents and epidemics during the month-long season. Most of them come from impoverished areas, where health precautions are inadequate.

They huddle in tent camps on the edge of the Red Sea port of Jiddah, in special dormitories near Mecca and also in tent city astride Mount Arafat. The Lebanese Health ministry announced the first two cholera deaths since the epidemic arrived in the country from Syria last week. Hospital sources reported 25 confirmed cases.

Officials in Damascus have reported 2,105 cases and 68 deaths. In Jordan, the Health Ministry has reported 166 confirmed cases but no deaths.

The Saudi health ministry is organizing preventive action, and large numbers of people are lining up at hospitals for inoculation. People are advised to drink boiled water, be inoculated and report any suspected case to the nearest hospital.

A Syrian official said it could take two months to bring the epidemic under control.

Akara: Three people have died of "acute intestinal disease" in the south-western Turkish province of Denizli and 21 are in hospital with the same ailment, a Health Ministry official said today. He denied that the disease was cholera, but was unable to say what it was.

He described it as a seasonal disease, said it was being investigated.

The question of whether there is cholera in Turkey, as in Syria, has been the subject of controversy among officials and of persistent rumour here. The mayor of Ankara has said that there is cholera in the capital, but the Health Ministry has denied this.

Willington: The number of cholera cases in an outbreak which has killed nine people in the British self-governing colony of the Gilbert Islands in the South Pacific has risen to 150. New Zealand health authorities said today.—AP and Reuter.

Bhutto counsel charges General Zia with trying to bar him from poll

From Richard Wigg
Lahore, Sept 12

General Zia, Pakistan's chief martial law administrator, was accused here today of "the grossest contempt of court" and of intervening personally to prevent Justice Bhutto, the former Prime Minister, from leading his People's Party in the general election promised for next month.

Mr Naseer Bakhtiar, the former Attorney General, speaking in the Lahore High Court on behalf of Mr Bhutto's application for bail, said of General Zia: "He does not want Mr Bhutto to contest the general election and so this case is just an excuse." He also accused General Zia of "bad faith".

Mr Bhutto, who was arrested on September 3 and is being held at the Kot Lakhpat jail here under army guard, is accused of personally ordering the chief of the Federal Security Force to kill a political opponent in Lahore in November 1974. But the alleged

ambush apparently misfired and instead of Mr Ahmad Raza Kasuri, an outspoken critic of Mr Bhutto in the National Assembly, the man's father died from gunshot wounds.

Mr Justice Samdani gave no ruling today saying that he would consider further evidence after Mr Bhutto's appearance tomorrow.

The bail application is of importance for Mr Bhutto as on it depends whether he will be able to lead his People's Party personally in the election campaign. The campaign begins with a meeting in Rawalpindi towards the end of this week.

Mr Bakhtiar, seized on General Zia's interview last week with *The New York Times* in which he said included giving access to secret information, he contended, in order to launch proceedings against Mr Bhutto. The Army's initial promise that no attorney general or senior law officer would in future belong to any political party had been broken at the special prosecutor appointed against Mr Bhutto was a member of a hostile political party.

It was on August 29 that Pakistan's High Court Bar Association first called for the arrest of Mr Bhutto.

Mr Bakhtiar claimed that none of the alleged confessions by six arrested members of the Federal Security Force was in any way linked to Mr Bhutto.

It was last for five years, but the right of a Prime Minister to seek and be granted a dissolution before the end of the five-year term should arise only on the day of the election, to include Northern Ireland, Lord Chancellor's and Law Officers' Departments, Transport, Overseas Development, and Social Security, and any other minister with departmental responsibility for confidence in a debate held in July at the end of each session.

Parliamentary sessions should begin on February 1 each year, and end on July 31. The House would not sit on Good Friday, Easter Monday and the Spring Bank Holiday. (In 1978, for example, this would mean that the House would sit on 126 days in a normal session.) The hours of sitting should be from 2.30 pm to 10 pm Monday to Thursday and from 10 am to 5 pm on Friday. Neither the session nor the sitting hours should be extended save by the vote of two thirds majority of the whole House. Where, during the period between October and February, the Speaker certifies upon the application of either the Prime Minister or the Leader of the Opposition that there is an emergency of national importance, the sitting hours should be doubled, making 28 days. In an average session ten Fridays are devoted to private members' Bills. This number of days should be retained. Thus in all 38 days would be devoted to private members' business.

Supply days and general debates

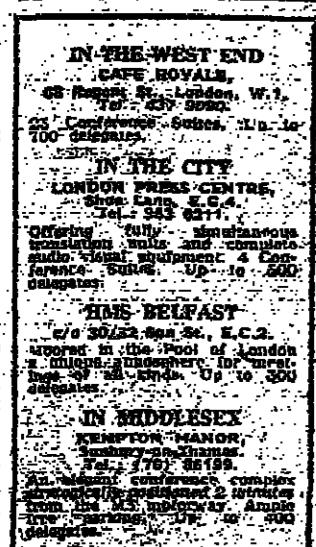
At present there are 29 supply days. Under these proposals 32 days would be compulsorily allocated to debate on all the departments of government.

A further 12 days (ie two days each month) must be devoted to general debates on motions selected by the Opposition in the Commons.

Private members' business

Whereas at present in an average session ten Fridays and four other days are devoted to private members' motions, this number should be doubled, making 28 days. In an average session ten Fridays are devoted to private members' Bills. This number of days should be extended save by the vote of two thirds majority of the whole House. Where, during the period between October and February, the Speaker certifies upon the application of either the Prime Minister or the Leader of the Opposition that there is an emergency of national importance, the sitting hours should be doubled, making 28 days. In an average session ten Fridays are devoted to private members' Bills. This number of days should be extended save by the vote of two thirds majority of the whole House. 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Guide to Conference facilities



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Fighting the battle of the conference hall

London, the capital city of the conference and exhibition business as well as of the country, has again made much of the running this year. Of course the Queen's silver jubilee helped, though it inspired exhibitions rather than conferences, among them the Silver Jubilee Exhibition in Hyde Park, and the British Genius Exhibition at Battersea.

In this article, however, I thought I would look at some developments outside London. This is partly because the jubilee spin-offs have probably seen the exhibitions, and partly because I want to look forward rather than backward.

Before leaving the capital, however, I note that it does rather look as if the balance between London and the regions is shifting, principally in favour of the latter.

The London Convention Bureau, for instance, reports that the loss of the motor and the furniture shows to the National Exhibition Centre at Birmingham has meant a gain of some millions of pounds in revenue to Midlands hoteliers, restaurateurs and travel firms.

Incidentally, the NEC, which was opened in February last year by the Queen, has been awarded the "Travel Oscar" by the British Tourist Authority, the "Come to Britain" Trophy for the best new attraction for overseas visitors.

London, however, is not taking all this lying down. The LCB, for example, which has concentrated on promoting meetings and incentive travel to the capital, is now counter-attacking with an attempt to increase London's standing as a centre for exhibitions whether great or small.

The first shot in this battle has already been fired, in the shape of a new edition of *Exhibition London*. Produced jointly by LCB, Olympia and Earl's Court, this

gives details of every exhibition floor in London larger than 5,000 sq ft. Free copies, single or in quantity, are available from LCB's new address, 26 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1 ODU (01-750 5841).

and guest houses exist to serve this need.

The guide is published by the National Council for Social Service's Bedford Square Press and costs £2. If you do not see it in shop, send £2.20 to the distributor, Bookpoint Ltd, 90 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8JT.

Where to go for talks

What could a Thames sailing barge, Hever Castle, Roedean School and Newcastle upon Tyne Civic Centre possibly have in common?

The answer, bearing in mind the kind of article this is, is not too hard: they are all conference centres. These and many more are listed in *Conferencing with a Difference - Some Unusual Venues*, published for the British Tourist Authority by the Association of Conference Executives at £5.

Roedean, for example, the girls' school fabled in limerick and song, can accommodate up to 53 delegates in single rooms for conferences of between two and four days from the third week in July to the first week in September.

If you are interested in this booklet, please do not call me, but try instead ACE at 8 St John's Street, Hungerford, Berks, RG14 6DD. Telephone 0480 57959.

Another useful guide that has appeared recently is *Bring Your Own Towel*, in which Malcolm Hulke gives a selection of nearly 300 of the cheaper residential conference venues throughout Britain.

"Britain", says Mr Hulke, "is surely the most organized country in the world. If two people share an interest they form a national association. If three they go away for a conference. Scores of residential centres, religious retreats

and so on.

The stands themselves will be lightweight, trellised affairs with lots of trailing vines. It is also planned to have a multi-purpose theatre where, for example, there could be films, cooking demonstrations or quiz sessions.

Ross Davies

Certainly, it sounds fascinating. This is both a trade and a public event, Mr Smith says he wants to get away from the rather formal row of stands. This time, stands will be grouped, each with its own entrance area, so people can wander round, sit down, drink and eat as well as just look.

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SPORT

Football

A gentle warm-up for the giants

By Norman Fox

Football Correspondent

Thirteen clubs from the British Isles are involved in this week's three European football competitions and a fourteenth, Liverpool, rest their laurels until the second round next month. The leading question this season is: is Liverpool to retain the European Cup that they won in Rome when they beat Borussia Mönchengladbach with surprising ease. Indeed, they can, but for the time being, the title will be shared by a number of Europe's less illustrious clubs from Istanbul to Landskrona in Sweden.

Under a system of seeding in which clubs have been placed in European semi-final round in the past five years are kept apart, the first round inevitably becomes a predictable and none too exciting occasion. There are exceptions, including the pairings of Manchester United with St Etienne in the Cup Winners' Cup and Dynamo Bucharest with Atlético Madrid in the European Cup. For most of the powerful clubs, however, the first round is a general draw on an equal court. Some are farther out than others and travel can offer quite substantial advantages, but the stronger British clubs have little to fear this year.

In spite of a surprise at Liverpool's success and a certain reluctance to give them credit,

European critics are now left asking if there is any better organised team in this season's European Cup. The key word is "organised", because the draw for a competition of this size is not of itself leads straight to the Italians, Juventus, who, like Liverpool, provide the backbone of the national team.

Manchester United and City in successive rounds of the Uefa Cup which they went on to win by overcoming Atlético Bilbao on penalty kicks. They were not the only ones to have a British participant.

Indeed, Britain's traditional European stronghold ironically had only one British survivor, Queen's Park Rangers, in the year of Liverpool's triumph in the more important European Cup.

Rangers are among the British clubs entered into this season's competition with comparatively weak first round opponents. They meet a team from Luxembourg, Jeunesse d'Esch, in the European Cup and in spite of not having won the Scottish Premier Division in the year of Liverpool's triumph in the more important European Cup.

Celtic are among the British clubs entered into this season's competition with comparatively weak first round opponents. They meet a team from Luxembourg, Jeunesse d'Esch, in the European Cup and in spite of not having won the Scottish Premier Division in the year of Liverpool's triumph in the more important European Cup.

Several injury problems, but if there is any better organised team in this season's European Cup. This is a keen competition, with seven teams from Britain and Ireland, including Dynamo Kiev, Eintracht, Internazionale and Magdeburg in wait along the way. The four Football League clubs have come into stronger form this season against Torpedo of Moscow and, mentioned before, Atlético Madrid, Cup Winners' Cup semi-finalists last season, and the two English clubs, Bucharst, who have won Europe's leading scorer, Georgescu, with 47 goals in 34 league games.

Rangers have already begun their European season, having beaten a team from Luxembourg, Queen's Park Rangers, in a Cup Winners' Cup preliminary round tie. Their next opponents, tweede Enschede, of the Netherlands, reached the Uefa Cup final in 1975 when they lost to have a British participant.

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Cricket

Top award goes to Vivian Richards

By Michael Prudger

Cricket Correspondent

Seven clubs from England, Scotland and Northern Ireland embark on the first round of the Uefa Cup. This is a keen competition, with seven teams from Britain and Ireland, including Dynamo Kiev, Eintracht, Internazionale and Magdeburg in wait along the way. The four Football League clubs have come into stronger form this season against Torpedo of Moscow and, mentioned before, Atlético Madrid, Cup Winners' Cup semi-finalists last season, and the two English clubs, Bucharst, who have won Europe's leading scorer, Georgescu, with 47 goals in 34 league games.

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Yachting

Bravado of Captain Courageous is lost on soft spoken skipper

Newport, Rhode Island, Sept 12.—One of the fastest yachts in the world go to sea tomorrow at the start of the America's Cup competition. Courageous, the American boat, is set sailing to the tiny cup the 100th anniversary of the New York yacht club where it has stayed for a century and a quarter, making it the oldest sports trophy that has never changed hands. Australia, the defending team, Western Australia, would like to rob the cup of that distinction by taking it home to the sun City Yacht Club, North of Perth.

The third annual award of £500 for the young England-qualified cricketer of the year was presented to the 21-year-old Wiltshireshire cricketer, swing bowler, Stephen Perry, awarded his county cap only in July, has taken six or more wickets on five occasions this season and totalled 73 first class catches.

The selections were made by a panel of judges consisting of John Atkinson, president of the Cricketers' Association, Jim Lester and Charles Elliott, on behalf of the England and Wales Cricket Association.

At the reception special awards for distinguished service to English cricket in 1977 were given to English cricketer of the year, Michael Gentry (Mitsubishi), for his "major contribution to the English game during 1977, and in particular for his leadership of his county and Test sides" and £250 each to Geoffrey Boycott, for his "recognition of the courage and determination displayed in rejoining the English team"; Derek Randall (Nottinghamshire) "for remaining an cricket lover that when he was not playing since he last earned his fitness in two reserve games".

Gentry has missed two matches since he was injured in a League Cup tie at Arsenal and will prove a welcome addition to a United side that were down 3-1 against Manchester City last Sunday.

Gentry could return in mid-field as a replacement for Macari. Although Macari travelled with the team he is rated doubtful because of a hamstring injury suffered at Maine Road.

The Middlesbrough defender, Middenden, will miss the Football League Cup second round replay against Sunderland, on Saturday night. Middenden has no chance of recovering from the knee injury that forced him to miss Saturday's match against Birmingham City. The manager, John Neal, will wait for fitness while his players, Cooper, Brine and McAndrew, are fit.

A Central League game at Derby tomorrow will provide the Wolverhampton Wanderers manager, Sam Chung, with crucial information about his players.

Hibbert and goalkeeping Pierce, which began as player-coaches should be fit. But Jimmy Gentry, who was injured in the Charity Shield match, will not be going.

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In recent tournaments Jacklin has been playing with a different attitude, and has not been asked to say anything about his dispute.

"Because there are differences I feel it better not to play in the Masters," Jacklin said.

In Melbourne, the Victorian Cricket Association decided not to place a "blanket ban" on players contracted with Mr Packer. Instead, the clubs are asked to "stipulate" through their solicitor an allegation that he had attempted to fix a match against Wolverhampton Wanderers in May 1972.



Dripping wet: Ted Turner, captain of Courageous, emerges from Newport harbour after being tossed overboard by his crew.

Both yachts in this latest contest have basic similarities—12-metre class aluminium boats which to the eye look much the same. Courageous was built to defend the cup in 1974 from the syndicate who built America. Handled the cup to the New York Yacht Club on condition that it was to be put up as an international challenge trophy.

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by Christopher Warman

To move or not to move—that is still the question for firms in the expensive heart of London and the select parts of other large cities.

Many factors are crucial to the decision. The cost of having a building which devours money through rent and rates is now seen as just one, albeit important, reason for moving. A year or two ago it was in many cases the only one.

Matters have been complicated by the Government's decision to change its

policy of decentralization of office employment, which it would claim has always been the underlying reason for its existence.

Under that umbrella it is give particular attention to the promotion of office employment in inner urban areas but excluding the City and West End of London, and to widen its horizons to attract international concern to bring office employment to Britain.

The impression immediately conveyed when the Government announced new terms of reference for the bureau, which came into force on August 8, was that it was being required to reverse its previous work and try to lure back to London firms which it had spent many years persuading to leave.

That is not the case. Its main function is now defined as the promotion of better

terms, either on long decentralized office space leases or as owner-occupiers.

At present, however, there is no doubt of the continual increase in cost of running costs is causing concern to move than the clerical staff. Clerical staff can be recruited locally, and are often of high quality compared with the city staff.

The decline in rents has had an effect both on firms

under pressure to move and those with no immediate need to relocate.

The Portsmouth, £1 to £2.30

former were able to find Norwich, £3.25 in Ipswich, £1.75 to £3.25 in Bristol, £2

much lower than expected, in Derby, £1.25 to £3.25 in

London and the south-east. The difficulty does not end there, because middle management is often reluctant to move with the firm.

In London there is accommodation, but it is largely in small pieces unsuitable for any but the smallest firms.

Local government planners are putting such constraints on office development as to

diminish its value. The EMI's

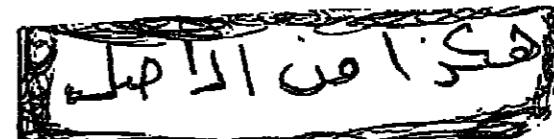
building in Tottenham Court

get the space or accommodation they want, and in the country they are liable to lose the staff they want and the ease of communications. Some firms moving out have found the need to maintain an office back in the centre of the city, and end up with two offices.

The difficulties can be overcome, but they emphasize the need for a most thorough assessment of a firm's requirements before any move is made.

The author is Local Government Correspondent, *The Times*.

Look before you leap out of the frying pan



Office rents rise to £18 a sq ft in central London, but in Croydon (above) they are between £6.50 and £8.

Typing at 900 words a minute



The Olivetti Editor S14 automatic typing system can handle the mass production of personalized yet standard letters and circulars at great speed.

At least 25 it is not difficult to envisage being allowed for in the day when every well-rearranged sales director's include a sufficient department will have a word-processor. Word-processing

is not a new term for automatic reorganizing, typing and the by-product of building machines which can be extended by a score of systems, costing anything from an office should £3,000, or £75 a month in large office rental, to £20,000 or more.

Word processors record on magnetic tape, cards or edge-punched cards, paper tape, and so on. The idea is that every word which is typed in the office and is of potential future use should be machine electronically "memorized" and retrievable in conveniently typed form.

Thus a sales director, having dictated a "master" letter, can instruct his secretary to circulate it to a given address list. She inserts the medium, touches a button and the machine heads the first letter with name, address and salutation.

Then the machine switches to the second medium and types the letter at anything

from 150 to 500 words a minute. One set, IBM's

systems can do more than 900 words a minute. With many of the systems the secretary does not have to follow the same format. Interchanging of paragraphs can be arranged by "printing" the buttons.

This facility may prove even more valuable when inquiries begin to flow in. From a similar programme, personalized letters can be dispatched in response to each.

When the Midland Bank popularizing the Access credit cards, reply-demanding inquiries suddenly rose from 100 to 1,000 a day, as well as 30 telephone calls. With only a handful of magnetic tape processors—each card could contain 12,800 characters—it was able to apply "personality" to all, almost without delay.

A further use for word processing machines is in dealing with complaints. No matter to whom within an organization a complaint may be addressed, it is fairly simple for an individual letter, specifically typed, to be sent off without delay even if the "author" has but a few moments to spare no select appropriate paragraphs from the machines' repertoire.

More complex systems, costing from £6,000 to £10,000, can be operated with a series of typing stations completely eliminating the need for a typist.

The aim of any sales order processing system should be to effect total documentation, including that of sales and accounting offices, at one time. Once the realms of mechanization have been entered the visible record computer (VRC) becomes

the equivalent of the word processor.

To set up a fully efficient sales order processing system one has to view it from several aspects. All too often customer service may suffer simply because the

in 1977 than there were in 1963 when the bureau was set up. In that time there have been 763 moves involving 48,992 jobs to the London boroughs, including the inner areas, although most have been to the outer boroughs with Croydon the main recipient. The total bureau relocation programme has involved 1,261 moves and 96,163 jobs.

What the bureau has been doing, therefore, is to siphon off the increasing number of office jobs and put them elsewhere because there just is not enough room in London, attraction that it remains, to sustain them all.

In the last year or two, many firms in London have decided not to move, and a bureau study established that most of the non-movers occupied space on favour-

able terms, either on long decentralized office space leases or as owner-occupiers.

The immediate economic incentive to decentralize was thus much less in London compared with elsewhere. Prices reduced—and the economic cost remains for them to tend up to £18 a sq ft in central London. Compare

availability of staff is another. In London the middle management is more expensive so many conditions before the building went ahead that the accommodation is scarcely what the firm wants.

Firms like to take their Road, London, is a case in point. The borough council

is causing some difficulties. Firms have to move than the clerical staff can be recruited locally, and are often of high quality compared with the city staff.

The availability of staff is another. In London the middle management is more expensive so many conditions before the building went ahead that the accommodation is scarcely what the firm wants.

In the cities firms cannot get the space or accommodation they want, and in the country they are liable to lose the staff they want and the ease of communications. Some firms moving out have found the need to maintain an office back in the centre of the city, and end up with two offices.

The difficulties can be overcome, but they emphasize the need for a most thorough assessment of a firm's requirements before any move is made.

The author is Local Government Correspondent, *The Times*.

Telephone's potential awaits the right connexions

The telephone handset is arguably the most important item of equipment for the low priority. It is one of the business needs. Yet, while those activities that seems to be spent on a growing range of computer equipment and other office machinery, the telephone is often allocated to show how business is lost, industrial relations are soured and clerical costs multiplied because the straightforward process of recording a message fails.

This estimate is slightly misleading in that many modern computer systems, which can be connected to telephone networks for data transmission, contain equipment that is strictly speaking part of the telecommunications service of an organization.

Several big manufacturing companies and international finance houses have effective computer-controlled switchboards with a wide range of answering services, facilities for dictation, methods to call up messages on television screens, procedures to allocate priority to certain calls and automatic rerouting codes.

But a little imagination can also provide valuable aids without investing in complicated and expensive apparatus. The telephone answering device is one such development that has been exploited among those who would not tolerate a straightforward process of recording a message fails.

One manufacturer claims that telephones have local shops. The service, which regularly includes employees in British Oxygen figures, is recorded early each morning on a cassette tape lasting about two minutes.

A similar system has been established by the British Steel Corporation but with some refinement. That service includes the regular telephone answering system by which workers can ask questions of the management. They need not identify themselves, and their questions are answered, perhaps, during the following day's broadcast.

P.W.

New from Texas Instruments. A whisper-quiet desk calculator. With reliable thermo-electronic printing.

The TI-5015 at £69.95*
Great value in a printing calculator.

The Texas Instruments TI-5015 is so quiet that the loudest noise you hear is tearing off the printout. The printing mechanism has virtually no moving parts to maintain.

No messy ribbon, either.

The technology behind these advantages is thermo-electronic printing from Texas Instruments. Proven on more than 100,000 Texas computer terminals and now also available on advanced calculators. With non-impact thermo-electronic printing, the TI-5015 is quieter and more reliable than you would have believed possible.

The compact, attractive TI-5015 desk printing calculator is outstanding value for money. Designed for general use in offices, shops and in the home, the TI-5015 has capabilities usually found only on bulky and expensive specialised machines. Thanks to its independent add-register feature. And its electronic decimal-setting.

And its ability to cope with the fastest keyboard operators.

The TI-5040 at £109.95*
Offers both printing and display.

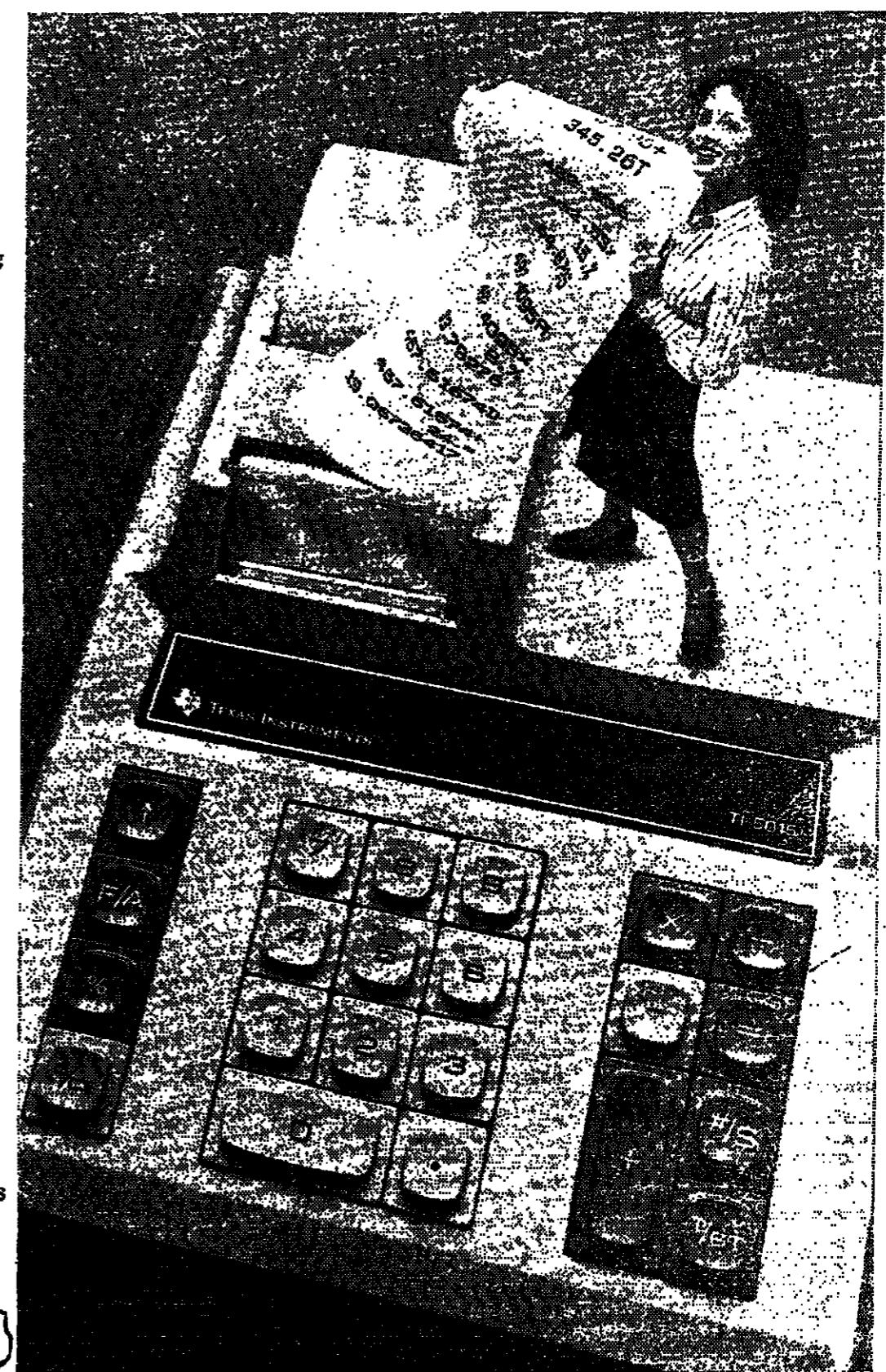
The TI-5040 features the same quiet and reliable thermo-electronic printing capability. Or you can switch off the printer and use only the display — 10 large, bright green digits with commas. Includes independent add-register feature, plus versatile 4-function memory.

The TI-5200 at £49.95*
12-digit display calculator.

The TI-5200 has a 12-digit display with large, bright green numbers. Full 4-function memory. A handsome and useful desk display calculator for general office, home, or executive use.

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The Norwich way is to speak the business language of Europe.

In France, perfume is a great industry and mimosa an important ingredient in its manufacture.

So it is on the hills above Grasse,
where mimosa grows wild, that Monsieur



Philippe Bonne of Norwich Union Insurance discusses with Monsieur Cetto, top parfumeur

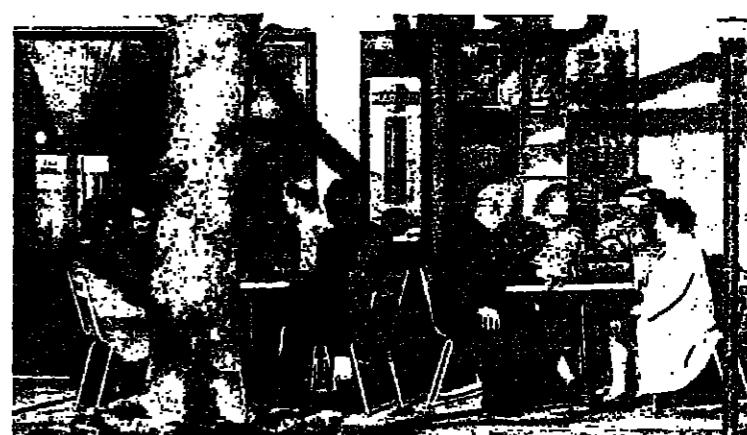
aspects of the business of their mutual client, Lancôme.

Why does a famous French perfume house like Lancôme turn to Norwich Union for important insurances?

Like most successful



companies Lancôme know the value of expert advice. They appreciate that Norwich Union are specialists with an informed and sympathetic understanding of their clients' business and its insurance needs.



Although many major international companies enjoy Norwich Union's personal approach to insurance, it isn't reserved for big names only.

Take your problems to

Norwich and
you'll find they
speak your
language too.



A high-contrast, black and white photograph of two people standing in a field. The person on the left is wearing a dark jacket and light-colored pants, while the person on the right is wearing a light-colored jacket and dark pants. The background is a dense, textured field.

Bernard Levin

Good to be back in the land of hope and rhubarb

It is very agreeable indeed to be welcomed back to this country after a long holiday, by an item of news which—well, we shall come to the feelings it provokes in a moment, but first let us have the facts:

Three sticks of rhubarb which pensioner Mr Frank Clay entered in Nottingham City Council's allotments show resulted in his disqualification.

The rhubarb was part of his display for a tray of vegetables and the judges ruled that rhubarb was not vegetable but a fruit. Now Mr Clay, an allotment holder who has been showing vegetables for 20 years, is complaining to the Royal Horticultural Society in London. He wants them to rule that rhubarb really is a vegetable.

Now on the merits of the matter at issue I do not pre-sume to have views. Whether rhubarb is a fruit or a vegetable, or for that matter an animal or a mineral, is no concern of mine. I have never been particularly fond of it, and the sight of field of rhubarb nodding in the sun has always seemed to me, since I read Mr John Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids*, slightly sinister. Nor am I really con-

sidering the affair as one of principle; certainly, if Mr Clay has been disqualified for inadequate reasons, I hope that the ruling which has aggrieved him will be reversed on appeal, but I can't bring myself to believe that the conviction will collapse overnight if it is not, nor do I see the Trent "foaming with much blood."

Nevertheless, there is more in this story than meets the steward. Rhubarb holds an honoured place in English history, because it is popularly supposed to have laxative properties and laxative properties are no less popularly supposed by the English to be desirable. Indeed, during the nineteenth century Opium War, the Chinese official responsible for organizing the defence against the British invaders, a Mr Lin, tried to cut off the enemy's supplies of rhubarb, because, as he wrote in a memorandum, without a regular dose of it the aggressors would become too costly to fight, so dependent were they on its medicinal effects.

But although rhubarb can thus be seen to be more than a simple fruit (or, as it might

be, vegetable), and although, indeed, not even this aspect of it exhausts its extra-curricular qualities (actors in crowds, scenes are widely believed to prefer rhubarb-rhubarb-rhubarb when they are required to seem engaged in conversation but are not supposed to be contributing to the audible dialogue), my feeling of delight at the report of the horrid affair in Nottingham sprang from something wider still, something that cannot properly be said to concern rhubarb at all.

The marvellous truth is that this country can almost be defined, and defined, moreover, in a way which really does sum up her qualities and her greatness, as a place in which a man may be disqualified from a competition for outstanding achievement produce on the ground that his entry was shown under the wrong heading, in which the man, thus disqualified, feels sufficiently aggrieved at his treatment to complain to the Royal Horticultural Society, in which that august body gives (as I have no doubt it will give) a solemn guarantee of the truth of what he has said.

And Woolcott's test is an even more searching one than he imagined, for not only would the Archer-Shee case be impossible in any totalitarian country, but there are even

whole business, including the nature of the prize at stake (a silver cup and a fiver), are printed in the newspapers.

Alexander Woolcott is an article in our paper this week on the case (it is a neat comment on the way in which art takes over from life that although I do not suppose that more than one in a hundred of my readers will recall the case from that name, which was born by the central figure in it, fully nine and ninety will know at once what I am referring to if I call him not George Archer-Shee but *The Winslow Boy*), summed up the implications of it like this:

For this can be said about the Archer-Shee case: that it could not happen in any totalitarian country. This is a peculiarly English, this story of a whole people getting worked up about a little matter of principle: above all, the story of the far-most men of the land taking up the cudgels—taking up the cudgels against the State, mind you—because a youngster had been unfairly treated.

democratic countries in which it would be at the very least unlikely (I cannot see it happening in Sweden, and cannot easily see it doing so even in France). Yet it could happen in England, and it did, and, I suppose, is why my allegiance to this country is so much more than any mere matter of birth.

And just as the Archer-Shee case defines the nature of England, so I cannot help feeling that the Great Nottingham Rhubarb Horror defines her *quality*, which is why I was so comforted to read about it on returning to my native soil. The English, as all the world knows, does not know, however, that what is peculiarly English, this story of a whole

people getting worked up about a little matter of principle: above all, the story of the far-most men of the land taking up the cudgels—taking up the cudgels against the State, mind you—because a youngster had been unfairly treated.

The reason for this is that the English are mad all the time: countries which go mad only intermittently do so in the most unpleasant and violent manner, massacring one another or burning the place down. But that is because the occasional and temporary nature of their madness allows them to store up the energy for such outbursts. The English settled down to the long haul of lucency so long ago (they had obviously been mad for

several centuries when Chaucer wrote the *Canterbury Tales*) that they have developed an easy, placid rhythm for their insanity, which flows on like the beautiful, unfurling English river from acon to

(because it does not, in this sense, provide anything that we feel obliged to live up to), men who plough the fields and sow the good seed on the land, and on occasion the good rhubarb-seed, to say nothing of the glorious crop of Englishness that springs up in the wake of the sower. Is it not better, when all is said and done, to sow rhubarb and reap a quartet with the Nottingham City Council, than to sow dragon's teeth and watch them come up armed men? Is it not better that we lay waste our power on cricket and kippers and horrible little yapping dogs than that we should exhaust ourselves in hating one another? Is not Mr Callaghan better, even if only by a little, than Sir Harold Wilson, even if we cannot explain the reason in any detail, why I feel a lift of the heart after many weeks under foreign skies, when I read about Mr Clay and his three sticks of rhubarb; and is it only you and I after all who need to know?

There is some corner of an English field, as well as of a foreign one, that is forever growing in it at this very moment. © Times Newspapers Ltd, 1977

much the same scale, about some point of Shakespearean exegesis. And although it was right that the English should have occupied themselves with such questions when the heavens were falling, it was and eternally will be impossible to explain to foreigners just why it was right. That, in a sense, defines the foreigners as well as the English, though you could not explain the meaning of that sentence, either, outside these shores.

But that is the point, really: one of the best things about living within these shores, and being to the manner born, is that you do not have to explain yourself to foreigners, and are not much concerned if they misunderstand you. And I know, even if we cannot explain the reason in any detail, why I feel a lift of the heart after many weeks under foreign skies, when I read about Mr Clay and his three sticks of rhubarb; and is it only you and I after all who need to know?

At about the time of the collapse of France in 1940, there were two correspondents running in this newspaper, which excited some comment at the time and more later. One concerned a dispute, so small as to be almost imperceptible, over some master in ornithology; the other was an argument, on

The bad news and the good about our immense growth potential

David Howell calls for a more imaginative approach to cut unemployment

"The scope for improvement of employment in manufacturing industry as a result of higher investment is limited." So wrote Mr David Bassett in these columns recently. And of course this august tribute of organized labour is absolutely right. Indeed, with characteristic moderation he understates the case. The scope for more jobs in many parts of manufacturing is not just zero, it is a minus. Industries like steel and motor assembly are bulging with surplus manpower. They need very badly to shed it. There is no hope of cutting until they do.

What, then, is to be done? With unemployment at its highest since the war, where are we to look for the new jobs—for the young, for women seeking work, for those displaced from heavy manufacturing industry? Where should the trade union leaders, with their understandably deep concern for the unemployed, be turning their minds? What new insights does the trade union movement have to offer?

It is, of course, easy to say "To hell with insights; give us a good dose of reflation (whatever that means), more public expenditure, import controls if things get rough in certain areas, ice it over with a sprinkling of job creation schemes, and serve". I can see the temptation to fall back on that kind of recipe, to stop thinking about the future, to urge action, any action somehow to ease things, however momentarily.

But it will not work, and in their heart of hearts forward-looking trade union leaders must know that. One can understand the longing to drag workers back into overmanned factories, to rebuild the industrial past. One can even understand the romantic socialist parentage of such hopes. But union leaders who have travelled a bit must, like industrialists, know the real score.

They must know perfectly well that Britain is going to find it harder and harder to keep markets for manufactured goods in this country (that is, in contrast to goods manufactured abroad from exported British capital and technology). They must know that it is bursting (has burst) into overcapacity in durables and electronics on a scale which is forcing British manufacturers to concentrate on higher and higher quality products, requiring less and less manpower, if we are to have any industrial capacity left at all.

Yet one looks in vain to the trade union establishment for signs that they are preparing constructively for this very different kind of world. The whole mood seems defensive, helpless. But there is no need for union leaders to trap themselves in this position. There is no need to be both unrealistic and defensive about job prospects in an economy such as ours just because the manufacturing sector is shrinking.

The reason for not despairing starts us in the face. It is that we have ceased to be primarily an industrial nation and that we are now, increasingly, a service economy. What is more, we are a very good, highly competitive service economy with immense growth potential. To say this is not in any way to decry the many areas of manufacturing excellence that persist. But remedies addressed to a predominantly manufacturing economy cannot be effective because that economy is passing away. Policies which acknowledged the changed economic structure might well produce very different results.

To put figures on the point, it has been estimated that in the first half of the nineteenth century a third of the occupied population was in the service sector. By the 1930s it had reached about half, and today it is approaching 60 per cent, or three out of every five working people. In the United States, well over two thirds of the workforce are in services rather than the manufacture of goods. Total receipts from invisible exports equal half the country's import bill. If it is in service industries that the productive power of the nation will increasingly lie, we are in a flying start.

The bad news is that the move from goods to services has overlapped in recent years with a uniquely rapid shift in the British workforce not merely from the private to the public sector, but to the weight-gathering part of the public sector, the part which produces in marketable form neither goods nor services. This is the well-known thesis which has been developed by Messrs Bacon and Elts in their articles and books.

We have to swim clear of this ugly recognition. That is generally recognized by all those who think beyond the very short term. But the right way to do it is not to try to recreate an uncompetitive manufacturing capacity, on a scale which belongs to the past in a frenzied effort to stem

rising unemployment. That is of no use to Britain's workforce, inside or outside trade unions, in the cities or the countryside.

Still less is the answer to siphon off first-rate minds and skills into public administration which adds nothing to the nation's marketable output. The right course would be to reinforce success in the already staggeringly successful commercial services sector of the economy. This would mean a complete reversal of the steam-age priorities which characterize the industrial strategy, from which, by ministerial admission, hardly a single extra job will come. It would mean an end to discrimination in public policy against service industries. It would mean a tax system which really favours business growth, particularly the growth of smaller enterprises which operate extensively in the service sector. It would mean removing gratuitous obstacles in the way of Britain's already expanding financial services, shipping services, insurance, consulting, engineering, tourist industries, telecommunications, advertising and television services—all gigantic overseas earners.

It would mean welcoming it as it affects the British economy. The good news is that Britain remains firmly among the world's leaders in internationally marketed services and its position is, if anything, getting stronger. The range of services is very broad and (TUC please note) these services produce large numbers of jobs, often being highly labour-intensive. The earnings from exported services, combined with the earnings from British capital invested overseas, two processes which are intertwined, give Britain the second largest surplus on the invisible (non-manufacturing) account in the United States. Total receipts from invisible exports equal half the country's import bill. If it is in service industries that the productive power of the nation will increasingly lie, we are in a flying start.

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they threw themselves into the festivities with a zeal that I, personally, found exhausting.

As the guest of the Sherry Exporters, my crash course in wine of the region was comparatively brief. My taste buds will take some time to recover. The tone was set early in my visit when a disengaged Gabriel Gonzalez Gilbey said: "Good heavens, it is past 11 am and we have not had our first cups of the day." The rule is that if you miss one at 11, then you are obliged to drink 11 at one pm.

In due course, as one o'clock struck the knell of passing sobriety, the sherry was drunk. I think it was Senor Gonzalez's uncle, the Marquis de Bonal, who is the only Spaniard to have been made a KBE by our Queen, and who is affectionately known as Don Manolo to everyone, who suggested to me that his recipe for longevity was to drink a little sherry often.

He did. So we all did. After four glasses, lockjaw set in, so there on the floor of the bodega, a mouse climbed a special miniature ladder and drank cream sherry from a copita. Yes, said Senor Gonzalez, some of the mice had become so tame that the workers had been able to train them to perform this trick. The small rodents showed a marked preference for the sweater vines, apparently.

Senorita Delage looked stunning and though only 20 was quite assured enough to charm the many (only too willing to be charmed) representatives of newspapers from the north east of America. Each year the festival is dedicated to a different country and this time it was the turn of that part of the United States. Needless to say,

next month the United States Supreme Court is to deliver one of its most momentous civil rights judgments for many years. Its decision could suddenly shatter the tranquil state of race relations in America now, throw black leaders into confusion, and remove the cornerstone of federal government policy by both Republican and Democratic administrations to blacks and other minorities.

The programme is known as "affirmative action". It is the practical expression of the government's commitment to abide by the promises implied in all the civil rights legislation—to afford blacks not only equal opportunity but also a better chance in life than they have ever had before.

Affirmative action is enforced by a very simple means: the government refuses to award any contract to a company or enterprise that practises discrimination.

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The decision has been heralded for almost a year by campus demonstrations, intense lobbying, sharp debate in the press, statements by government officials, and even speculation by President Carter. The case turns on the right of a white student to be admitted to the University of California, but the real issue is simple and much broader: is reverse discrimination a justifiable way of redressing the wrongs done to the blacks over many generations? Are racial quotas ever justified?

Allan Bakke applied to the medical school of the University of California at Davis in 1972. He was one of 2,664 people applying for 100 places, and he was refused. He applied the following year, and was again refused. Then he discovered that in both years the university had admitted 16 blacks, all of whom had lower marks than he had. So he sued the university for racial discrimination.

The decision has been set aside by the court, which ruled that the university's admissions policy was discriminatory. The court said that the university had been guilty of reverse discrimination in its admissions process, which it argued was not justified by the need to increase the proportion of minorities in every important institution to the point where it is roughly equal to the minority population of the country. And the programme has recently been extended to include the largest "minority" of all—women.

This new requirement takes no account of whether in a university classics department, for example, is the result of deliberate past discrimination or a lack of qualified applicants.

Compliance with the programme is judged simply by comparative statistics: if a university had a low number of minority lecturers four years ago, and still has the same low proportion four years later, it is judged to be in compliance and will be threatened with financial penalties. The same is true of libraries, government offices, schools—indeed almost any semi-public institution.

The issue has bitterly divided the liberals, and also the American Government. President Carter said a few weeks ago he "hated" to endorse the programme, but it has been extended to include the largest "minority" of all—women.

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All universities will be grateful for a ruling. At the moment they do not know where they stand and are subject to harassment from all sides. It is a "Catch 22" situation: if they discriminate against whites, they are sued if they select only on merit and given the small pool of qualified minority candidates this would not change the racial balance much; they lose it if they do not discriminate.

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HOW TO RUIN BRITAIN

If the hangover came the night before and the elation the morning after, brewers would be out of business. The principle that a lesser but early benefit will offset a substantial but postponed liability is one which rules human life; indeed it is the principle on which the human race reproduces itself. It is not surprising that it should also decide economic policy; what is surprising is that economists should not see it for what it is.

If anything is certain about an inflation of the money supply it is that its consequences take different lengths of time to arrive, and that the early consequences are relatively favourable while the longer term consequences are relatively unpleasant. The party comes first and the hangover comes second. The early—not immediate—effect of increasing the money supply is to stimulate business. When the Prime Minister says that he is considering giving a stimulus to business, he means that he is contemplating additional inflation of the money supply. If he does not mean that, he does not mean anything, because without inflation there will be no extra stimulus.

The question that has to be asked is: do we want higher inflation? Over the past six months the annual rate of inflation of the money supply has been 9.0 per cent. Is that too low? The same annual rate of inflation of prices has been 15.3 per cent, though it is falling. Do we want to push it up again? Those who argue for more inflation should be prepared to defend two propositions: that the present rate of increase in the money supply is not high enough; that the benefit of the

stimulus of the economy is the mechanism which produces unemployment. Those who want more inflation look only to the immediate effects. At first it is true that an increase in the money supply can get ahead of the increase in prices. If now the rate of increase of money supply were to be pushed up to 13 per cent, price increases would still continue to moderate for months to come. At the beginning of next year the money supply would be increasing considerably faster than retail prices, and indeed during the past three months money supply has already been increasing faster than prices.

That could certainly produce a rise in consumer spending, and the rise in consumption

would certainly produce some more jobs. But what would it do to the underlying factors which determine employment? It would provide a stimulus to a wage explosion and would encourage people to price themselves out of jobs. It would encourage trade union militancy and the belief that money grows on trees. It would weaken sterling and cause the pound to fall. It would weaken business confidence and discourage investment, because every sane businessman would see that this inflationary boom in consumption was not going to last.

By 1979 the boom—such as it was—would be over; by then prices would be rising even faster, under pressure from the wage explosion and the falling pound, and financed by the increase in the money supply. Unemployment would also be rising, and profits and productivity falling. The government, whoever they were, would again be faced with the problem of rising unemployment and accelerating inflation, but with both at a higher level. The inflationists pose as those who care about unemployment; in fact they cause it.

Inflation is not the sole cause, but it is an important cause, of the decline of Britain's competitiveness as an industrial power. That decline in competitiveness is the reason we have fallen behind in the standard of living, and it is one of the reasons for the present level of unemployment. There are now people who argue, and appear to have half persuaded the Prime Minister, that a further dose of inflation is what Britain needs. That is not economic policy; it is drug addiction.

THE OPEN DOOR POLICY FOR CHINA

It is appropriate that the Chinese leadership should have affirmed its policy of closer contact with the outside world through a document issued by the State Planning Commission. For over twenty years China's economic planners have had to face constant disruption. Even since the great leap forward in 1958 economic policy has been buffeted by political campaigns culminating in the upheaval of the cultural revolution. Thereafter recovery has been fitful, with the tempo of political struggle constantly being whipped up. As a result all those concerned for orderly economic progress became united in opposing the continuing revolution and those political attitudes of which the "Gang of Four"—and Mao Tse Tung himself, for the most part—were the champions.

In effect the policy will only be more of what has been going on for some years. More Chinese students going abroad, more welcome to experts from overseas to work in China, probably more imports from the West. Just how far cultural exchange will be a matter of quality as well as of quantity remains to be seen. Yet since the source of outside knowledge and experience, whether economic or cultural, will be from advanced countries and predominantly the West, the effect will be to break down some of the political barriers erected by theory. Invisible imports from the West should gain more status in China. As the first Chinese Ambassador to London reported to his government in 1877, one could not absorb the technology without paying attention to the ideas that animated the culture of this unknown country, to which he had been sent as China's first ever emissary in a world of equal nations.

Can it be assumed that Chinese foreign policy will henceforth be more influenced by the outlook of the State Planning Commission? It is reasonable to hope so. But the difficulties are greater and the scope for change at this stage in China's evolution somewhat less. The debate over the means of China's modernization is not

from jargon. In admitting that China needs to learn from the outside world and should not hesitate to do so, the xenophobia that came to the surface during the cultural revolution has been set aside. Mr Teng Hsiao-Ping's hand in the present outlook hardly needs emphasis.

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Jobs priority for new Ulster council

By Robert Rodwell

The Northern Ireland Economic Council held its inaugural meeting at Stormont yesterday. The 15-man council replaces a large advisory council disbanded last year after trade union members walked out in protest after they failed to stop the Government closing Northern Ireland's last three Ministry of Defence industrial establishments, with the loss of 2,000 skilled jobs.

Similarly comprised of nominees from the Confederation of British Industry, Chamber of Commerce and trade unions together with a number of "independents" from such sectional interests as farming, retailing and accountancy, the new council is chaired by Professor Charles Carter.

Professor Carter is an economist and is vice-chancellor of the University of Lancaster. From 1951 to 1959 he was pro-

fessor of applied economics at Queen's University, Belfast.

Before the council's first meeting yesterday he said he would give the job as much of his time as it required.

Unlike the former Economic Council, which had no staff or budget and was serviced by civil servants in the various government offices, the new Ulster Office central secretariat "the new body has been promised independence from the Government."

It is to have its own research and planning staff headed by a full-time director general. One of its first tasks yesterday was to agree on the wording of an advertisement for the £11,500-a-year post which will be open to public competition. Until the successful candidate is appointed Mr. John Whitlaw, a Stormont Castle official, Professor Carter said that some parts of Quigley were

already out of date and others had already been the subject of government action. Among these is the decision to write off Northern Ireland's present unemployment rate of 12.9 per cent as intolerable. This is the main problem behind all the others in the area in which we most need to seek additional solutions," he said.

For a starting point the council had the weighty and depressing Quigley Report on Northern Ireland's economic prospects and industrial future to consider. When published in October last year this found that 25,000 more jobs would disappear in Northern Ireland within three years if jobs continued. About 60,000 new jobs would need to be created to reduce unemployment to 5 per cent.

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Disruption fails to upset power supply

By Ronald Kershaw

Industrial action by workers at four Yorkshire power stations has spread to the Midlands, where a further three stations are involved, but the Central Electricity Generating Board report that the overtime ban, work to rule and non-cooperation with engineering staff are having no effect on electricity generation.

The action, initiated by the shop stewards' unofficial strike committee which organized last week's ineffective 48-hour power station stoppage, appears to be half-hearted, equally ineffective and, apart from attempting to relieve the frustration of the organizing committee, pointless.

Originally the dispute was in protest at the lack of progress by the union or management on demands for increased shift allowances, concessionary fuel and travel to work allowances. Concessionary fuel is being discussed by the Employees National Committee and the other two claims will be dealt with at Friday's meeting of the National Joint Industrial Council for the electricity supply industry.

The overtime bans are scheduled to end on September 24 but it is expected that the industrial action will end after Friday's meeting.

Protectionism a dangerous political force, Gatt says

Geneva, Sept 12.—By far the strongest warning issued by the Secretariat of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade about the growing danger of protectionism is contained in the annual survey.

"Protectionism has become a dangerous political force," it says. While governments of industrial countries continued to proclaim that economic growth remained their paramount policy objective, many were following policies in direct contradiction with the stated

Their reluctance to make significant changes in the direction of growth is seen by Gatt as further manifestation of the economic management that contributed significantly to the extraordinary severity of the last recession."

The Gatt attitude to protectionism has altered brusquely since spring when Mr. Olivier Long, Director General, was still talking about the encouraging performance of most countries in resisting such pressure.

His views changed in June when he told the annual meeting of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris that all governments were facing increasing protectionist forces and their capacity to resist was limited. When one gave in, the others found it that much more difficult to hold out.

The Gatt survey described the spread of protectionist

pressures as having reached a point where "the continued existence of an international order based on agreed and observed rules may be said to be open to question."

The reason, it says, is the effect on a stagnating market in developed areas of the growing industrial capacity, production and exports of developing countries, generating additional friction and demands for protection.

It also points to the contradiction between the concern about the stability of international financial structures—because of the rising indebtedness of some developing nations—and commercial policies which are restricting the capacity of these nations to meet the necessary foreign exchange.

"The restrictions act directly on the production process, tying resources to relatively less productive uses and thus restricting the expansion of the more productive and dynamic industries."

"At the same time, increasing protectionism generates economic uncertainty

Business appointments

Dalgety chairman elect named

Mr. David Donne, at present deputy chairman, is to become chairman of Dalgety. He succeeds Mr. R. A. Withers, who retires as chairman after the general meeting on November 10, 1977. Mr. Withers will continue as a director of the company.

Mr. J. M. Thompson has been elected to the board of Inveresk Group.

Mr. Julian M. Smith has joined the board of Philip Hill Investment Trust.

Mr. E. P. Foster, a director of Lombard North Central, has been appointed head of the company's credit finance division as from 1st January 1978.

Mr. A. G. Lane has been elected chairman of Ceramic Tiles Group in succession to the late Mr. Derek Johnson.

The Proliferating trade restrictions are an offshoot of an unwillingness to adjust and is weakening the recovery and growth capacity of the industrial economies in two mutually reinforcing ways," the survey concludes.

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Met Office improves Cosmos forecasting

The mathematical model of the atmosphere used by the Meteorological Office in producing weather forecasts is now running more than ten times as fast as when it was introduced four years ago, according to the office's annual report.

Overall, the computer forecasts for 48 hours ahead are now as good as the 24-hour predictions were a few years ago, while the 72-hour forecasts are now about as good as the earlier 48-hour ones.

Evaluation of computer forecasts made up to six days ahead shows that, up to five days, they are better than those made on the basis of "persistence and climatology", but further progress will require improvements in the physics of the model and its extension to cover the tropics and perhaps the whole globe.

The office's main computer system, known as Cosmos, consists of a large IBM 360 Model 195 coupled to a smaller IBM 370/158 machine.

Normally, the 195 releases the main processor for the more demanding work such as

Computer news

computing for numerical models of the atmosphere but when the main Model 195 is unserviceable, the smaller processor has sufficient power to provide a back-up for essential operational work.

In general, the office's data-processing branch, which operates the main computer system, provides the programs to store, control the quality of and retrieve observational data received from the telecommunication system, and produce plotted and line-drawn charts and graphical displays for operational tasks plus some research work.

As part of system development, the headquarters mini-computer laboratory, which is equipped with a Digital Equipment Company PDP 11/40 machine, is linked directly to the main Cosmos system. The minicomputer is normally used as a test-bed for experimental

projects, or to develop new systems, or to carry out routine work requiring more specialized peripheral units than are available to Cosmos.

LUCS link

London United Computing Systems (LUCS), formerly London University Computing Services, is now offering direct dial-up access to the parent company's bureau service in the "Uninet" telecommunication network, which links 140 cities in the United States and Canada, has been linked with the British Post Office's transatlantic Tymnet system.

Mr. Graham Barrett, LUCS managing director, says that the new link offers British companies the use of one of the widest ranges of scientific, engineering, business and financial time-sharing products available anywhere in the world.

Gas-gathering project

Computer models will

help in assessing the best way

to bring more gas into Britain from the North Sea fields using a gas-gathering pipeline network to be developed by Scientific Control Systems (Scioco), the London consultancy.

This will be done under contract to Gas Gathering Pipelines (North Sea), which has been formed to study and report on the viability of collecting and distributing gas and liquid products from the area.

Some fields in the North Sea are large enough to justify investment in their own gas collection and processing systems, but there are in addition many whose gas production is too small to warrant such investment.

It is for these smaller fields that Scioco will be developing mathematical models to analyse the best ways of linking a common collection system which will feed the gas from the various fields to an onshore processing unit.

Kenneth Owen

In brief

Plea to cut imports of low cost cutlery

The Cutlery and Silverware Association of Sheffield is to make an application to the Government to limit the importation of low cost cutlery.

It said yesterday that the import penetration of the United Kingdom market for stainless steel table cutlery had increased between 1965 and 1976 from 25 per cent to 78 per cent, by value, and from 50 cent to 90 per cent by volume.

The association said: "Other sections of the trade are also being threatened alarmingly and unless some restrictions are imposed we shall see the demise of one more prestigious British industry."

In recent weeks the association has obtained half promises from overseas manufacturers, on limiting exports to Britain.

Back to work at Batchelors Foods

Normal working was resumed at the two northern factories of Batchelors Foods yesterday after nine weeks of strike by 1,200 employees at Sheffield and Worksop plants.

The consequences of the dispute over pay are being evaluated but already it is clear the company lost £5m of retail sales of peas and an estimated £500,000 of beans.

A company spokesman said the strike had led to a stand-off between the Transport and General Workers' Union and the company was endorsed by meetings of workers at the two plants.

Beer output down

Beer output in July—at 3,697,375 bulk barrels—was 6.7 per cent down on the same month last year. For the first seven months of this year production was 22,720,656 bulk barrels, a fall of 0.4 per cent compared to the same period in 1976.

Land prices steady

Average prices paid for private housing land in England and Wales in the first half of 1976 were £1,580 per plot, or £43,000 per hectare, according to estimates published by the Department of the Environment

US Steel imports up

July steel imports into the United States totalled 1,582,037 short tons, up from the year earlier 1,190,080 tons but down from June's 1,818,620 tons, the American Institute for Imported Steel said in a monthly analysis based on United States Commerce Department data.

CONTRACTS AND TENDERS

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF WATER DEVELOPMENT

INVITATION TO TENDER

MOMBASA AND COASTAL WATER SUPPLY PROJECT

The Government of Kenya is to invite tenders for the supply, delivery, erection and commissioning of electrical equipment.

The tenders will be submitted under the terms of a scheme to be formed part of a scheme to improve the water supply system.

The scheme provides for the construction of a pumping station, treatment works, reservoirs and distribution systems.

The contract will comprise the

construction, supply, delivery, erection and commissioning of electrical equipment and

These documents will be issued

to bidders on or about 15 September, 1977. No tender will be accepted after 12 October, 1977. The closing date for tenders will be 15 November, 1977 at 10.00 hours. Tenders will be opened with the documents should be

written to:

The Director, Water Department, Ministry of Water Development, PO Box 1000, Nairobi, Kenya.

Tender documents will be issued

against payment of a deposit

to be paid by way of a crossed cheque in favour of the Government of Kenya.

The deposit will be refunded to

the successful tenderer at the

correct time.

Tenders are advised that they

should not be submitted to the

Ministry of Water Development

unless they are

signed and dated.

Each tender will be

open and read in public

at the time and place

and date specified in the

documents.

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BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

Banks in the political arena

It hardly matters if the market really is subject to a change in the search of a lost ally, CHICAGO, having managed to stave off the last cut in MLR on the grounds that the disparity between their base rates and money market rates was making precious little difference the volume of business, the clearing banks yesterday conceded that their rates were out of line and dropped them a full point to 7 per cent.

In going the whole hog the banks seem to be playing as much a political game as a financial one. And it may not have been entirely coincidental that yesterday the Price Commission also announced its terms of reference for bank charges. With the Commission deciding to look at the level of charges in the wider context of bank profitability, the clearers will need all the ammunition they can muster to argue their case.

Meanwhile, the clearers are maintaining the basic 4 per cent spread between deposit and base rates in the hope that the money that has flowed from deposits has already gone while a full point drop leaves the increasingly competitive building societies out on a limb with a gross rate of 10.2 per cent.

Certainly maintenance of the spread will help offset the impact of the base rate decline on bank profitability. Analysts were still talking of a £20m drop in the big four profits this year, however, as a result of a 1 point fall.

At the same time it was apparent from last week's banking figures that the American and Japanese banks are still garnering more than their fair share of what growth in industrial advances there is around at the moment. The hope of the clearers just now must be that loan demand will start to pick up—whether because of pressure on corporate liquidity or retailers restocking in front of the Christmas period—which will allow them to go into the wholesale markets and bid up money market rates to a level that will preempt any further cut in base rates.

group's acquisitive abilities given the way it wrested Felixstowe Docks from the jaws of the State in the form of the British Transport Docks Board last summer.

Nevertheless, is Euro Ferries a miscalculation as much a political game as a financial one? Not according to its ambitious and forceful chairman, Mr Keith Wickenden who points our Euro Ferries is now bigger than Furness Withy with a market value of £97m against FW's £82m.

However, the underlying asset values of the two companies partly explain why FW has brushed off Euro Ferries. Stated asset backing of £10p at the year-end is based on insured values at Euro Ferries and the shares could in fact be standing at a slight premium on a more conservative valuation of assets, while FW's shares down 6p to 306p are standing at a discount of around 50 per cent to assets.

That said, though, Euro Ferries has timed its move well with profits soaring ahead as a result of skilful past investment and a strong upswing in cross-Channel passenger traffic while Furness Withy face a gloomy outlook on the bulk shipping front.

Euro Ferries says it has no intention of selling the 5 per cent stake in FW which it bought from Eurocanadian—"at above the current market price" because of an initial rebuff. So another dimension is added to the uncertainty which has surrounded FW since the Monopolies Commission ruling against any Eurocanadian bid for FW last October.

Meanwhile, Euro Ferries with the likely bonus of £3m exchange profit on its Dutch florin borrowings at the year end could be set fair to exceed a £20m profit for a p/e ratio of just over 10 at 911p on a fully-taxed basis—though allowances should preclude mainstream tax payments for several years. Given a yield of only 4.6 per cent that seems fair value, while Furness shareholders should welcome a direct approach if only for the opportunity it would provide to raise significantly a six times covered dividend yielding only of 3.7 per cent.

BSR

A high-flyer falters

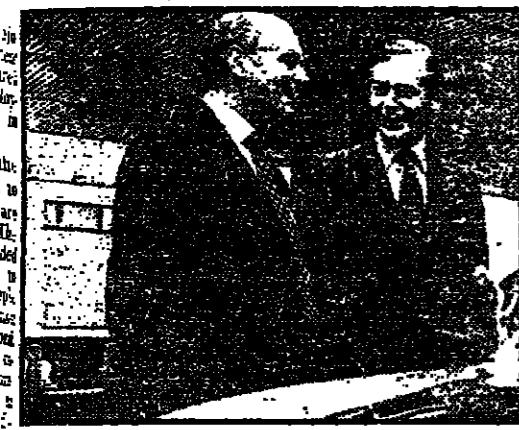
If the stock market needed any further evidence about how painful the impact of a stronger pound can be on big foreign earners it needs to look no further than the latest interim results from BSR.

It is true that BSR with profits down from £13.1m to £12.2m against stock market expectations of £16m plus—has had other worries to contend with. Its first-half has embraced a clean out at newly-acquired Judge International, involving a revaluation of stock on to a more conservative footing and redundancy costs, and a period of dismal demand for record changes in the United Kingdom and Europe, particularly during the second quarter when promotional and development expenditure was running at high levels.

But the United States market, which takes about 70 per cent of BSR's record changes, remained reasonably strong, and it is here that the absence of last year's currency gains becomes so important. Exchange rate conversion profits in the first half of 1976 could have been worth upwards of £1.5m, and there were further benefits from BSR's practice of invoicing in local currencies.

Meanwhile, little increase in profits is likely this year, but with a return from recent military contracts next year, an improvement in car production and some possibility of growing area demand, there is no reason for despondency on the profits front.

Still RRM has shown it is dissatisfied with its current size and product range without managing to do anything about it, leaving itself in the same shape with, presumably, the problems it was trying to buy itself out of. A yield of 9 per cent with the shares at 72p, down 4p, takes account of its frustrated ambitions.



• Rolls-Royce Motors whose chairman and managing director are respectively Mr Ian Fraser and Mr David Plastow (above) is suffering from a slightly tarnished image not helped by its interim figures. Having failed in its acquisition plans, losing both L. Gardner and Fodens, the 22 per cent increase in first-half profits to £3.7m published yesterday is overshadowed by labour problems, which are preventing an increase in car production, disappointing sales of automotive diesel engines and rising debt.

Acquiring Gardner would have helped solve the diesel engine problem, while the silver Shadow, although revamped, still needs replacement before too long. Rising debt is a burden the group is going to have to live with for the moment since it has already been to shareholders for two rights issues.

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Euro Ferries/Furness

Mr Wickenden's grand design

There is no doubt European Ferries' image as a growth stock. Interim profits of £1m are fully £5m above those of last year. Nor can there be any doubts about the

time there are no exchange rate profits and none are likely in the second half either. Consumer products in the United Kingdom have, fortunately, pulled back into profit and the forward order book is much improved, but the European record changer business shows little sign of reviving.

So profits for the full year may be little better than last year's £28.7m, and the best hope for the shares, down with a bump by 24p to 124p yesterday, is that the disappointing profits are now fully reflected in a prospective p/e ratio of around 6. The only consolation lies in the lowly 35 per cent tax charge, which is likely to hold for the full year thanks partly to the practice of invoicing American business through Bermuda, and the dividend which, following the rights issue, has been doubled at the interim.

Business Diary: Plane speaking



Alistair Grahame: post reante.

so that talks with the Air Traffic Control Assistant can be resumed.

From Business Diary's own talk in Blackpool last week, it rather seems as if Booth would dearly love to wrap up the whole dispute tomorrow, but has orders to stand firm.

Furthermore, Alistair Grahame, the deputy secretary of the Civil and Public Services Association and the man on the union side most closely involved in the dispute, was heard to say that he had never had a better case, and had won worse.

It is little more than three months since the cream of the German banking and business world gathered in the Federal Bank in Frankfurt to bid farewell to Dr Karl Klasen as president.

Now the signs are that Klasen will be making a comeback on the Frankfurt financial stage and many of those

who attended that lavish ceremony, in the unlikely setting of the Federal Bank Gym, are far from pleased.

For, unless a major upset occurs, Klasen will be nominated for election to the supervisory board of the Deutsche Bank, one of the leading commercial banks, next summer.

Before becoming Federal Bank president in 1970, he was one of the Deutsche Bank's two managing spokesmen. It seems that even while Federal Bank president he harboured a desire to return to the bank in which he made his reputation and career.

In a way, nothing could be more natural than for a successful "old boy" to return to his alma mater. But, as Federal Bank president, Klasen was privy to a lot of inside information and rival bankers fear that in less than a year's time this could be at the disposal of the Deutsche Bank.

A testing time today for Clive Wilkinson, who this afternoon takes the chair at his first policy-making board meeting of the Council for Small Industries in Rural England.

Wilkinson, Business Diary understands, is likely to invite the council's sponsor, the Department of the Environment, to put its money where its mouth is and make available some more cash for the new and busier role CoSIRA is being asked to play.

If so, he will probably want an increase over the £1.5m a year it is able to lend to small firms as agent of the Development Commission. With that would go a request for more

■ The writer Brian Rothery strikes a blow at that wide

gap between the signs on the exterior of The Swan, a pub in Cosmo Place, Bloomsbury. One notice declares the premises to be "An English Heritage Pub". It is directly above another sign which says "American Hamburgers".

Cheaper money—not in everyone's interest

Interest rates have fallen more sharply than most could have expected since their crisis levels of last year, bringing problems as well as benefits. John Whitmore reports.

When the Bank of England raised minimum lending rate to a crisis level of 15 per cent on October 7 last year, almost any odds could have been got against its falling to 81 per cent within 12 months. Even in January when stage one of the great slide in interest rates was just starting to gather momentum the general view was that MLR was unlikely to drop much below 10 per cent by the end of 1977.

What then, has happened? In a nutshell, two things—a revival in confidence in the pound and sluggish domestic demand for new bank credit because of the economic recession.

This time last year the only thing to do with sterling was to sell it. But, by the turn of the year, there had been a transformation. A combination of exchange control measures, designed to force the repatriation of money lent overseas, and the international safety net erected to steady the badly sagging sterling, together led to a flood of money into the country between December and April.

Since then, moreover, the inflows have continued as our balance of trade has steadily improved and moved towards surplus. Finally, the opend has benefited from this summer's weakness in the dollar.

All this buying of sterling need not, however, have pushed domestic interest rates down as sharply as it has. The effect would in all probability have been very much less had the authorities decided to keep the available supply of sterling fixed and only allow the exchange rate to rise to a level where demand and the existing supply of pounds balance.

Instead, the authorities decided to hold the external value of sterling stable, partly because they were concerned about our export competitiveness and partly because they wanted to buy as much foreign currency as possible to rebuild our much depleted foreign exchange reserves.

To achieve this they consistently increased the supply of sterling available to the foreign exchange markets in order to balance supply and demand at the exchange rate of their choice—about 62 per cent of sterling's December, 1971, value against a basket of international currencies.

The initial effect of increasing the supply of sterling has been, of course, to increase the quantity of money slopping

around in the money markets. At the same time the banks, faced by poor demand for new loans because of the lack of economic activity and improved liquidity of the corporate sector, have not been keen to bid for this money. As a result, the supply of money has exceeded demand and its price has fallen sharply.

These, then, are the basic reasons why interest rates have been tumbling. But most people have also probably noticed that some have been falling much more rapidly than others.

The most notable differential has been between short and long-term interest rates. A year ago there was not a vast amount to choose between the prices of short and long-term money. Short-term rates were up to 15 per cent plus and 20-year gilt-edged stocks offered yields only marginally higher at 16-17 per cent.

Today, most short-term interest rates in the money markets are a little either side of 6 per cent, but the new long-dated gilt-edged stock on offer this week gives a yield of 12%.

The explanation for the slow fall in longer term interest rates is twofold. First, the Government has been selling large quantities of long-dated stock to meet its borrowing requirement and control the rate of growth in the money supply.

Secondly, investors have been wary about bidding down the yields on longer-term securities while the inflation

rate has remained so high.

Besides the differential between short and long-term rates, there have been other notable differences—between, for instance, the speed with which bank interest rates have fallen compared with, say, those offered by building societies and National Savings.

On the whole, bank interest rates have come down much in line with money market rates—albeit with occasional lags over a period of weeks. By and large the banks have had to keep reasonably close to money market rates for fear of losing new loan business to the more aggressive competition provided by, for instance, the overseas banks operating in London.

The fall in interest to present levels does, however, pose problems for the clearing banks. Out of the interest they earn on loans they have to cover not only the interest they pay on the money they themselves borrow but also the big overhead costs involved in running some 12,000 branches, employing some 200,000 people.

On the face of it, the banks have a large amount of apparently cheap money at their disposal in the form of current accounts that make up some 40 per cent of their total source of funds. The banks reckon, however, that by the time their overheads are set against this money, the cost of current account money is probably close to the equivalent of paying interest at 7 per cent.

In other words, with an overhead cost that is likely to con-

tinue to rise, while interest rates could, if all goes well, stay low for a number of years, the banks are seriously concerned about the potential squeeze on profits. These, though they look large to the public, are consistently described by the banks themselves as totally inadequate, given the recent rate of inflation.

Hence, the attention now being given to the future of the highly expensive branch network, with the banks appearing to have the option of simply rationalizing their existing services or making a major capital investment by taking money transmission and banking services fully into the age of electronics.

While the banks have so far reduced their rates more or less in tandem with the money market rates, the building societies have not. Their share rate, which was 10.15 gross to the standard rate taxpayer, while mortgage rate has come down from 12% to 10% per cent.

Why have the building societies not cut their rates more? The basic answer is that they have been afraid that a larger cut in their savings rate would leave them with an insufficient inflow of savings to meet a lending target which this year approaches £7,000m.

After the recent fall in other interest rates, however, it is difficult to see how the societies are going to be made any less competitive by further cuts in their interest rates. Certainly, long-dated gilts offer competition, but there is little rivalry elsewhere. The gross share rate now stands at more than the 10.15 per cent bank deposit rate. It is also comfortably above local authority rates, while interest rates on National Savings investment accounts, a potential competitor, are about to be cut from 10 to 9 per cent—and could well be cut again if gilt-edged yields continue to fall.

A further cut in the interest rate paid to the 15 million building society savers who have some £23,000m in the societies might not be welcome, given that recent returns to

savers have been inadequate to compensate for the rate at which the real value of their capital has been falling. Arguably, however, building societies are mainly in business to provide housing finance at competitive, rather than "fair" rates.

That said, the mechanism by which housing finance is provided in this country takes one into hotly debated territory.

The whole question of appropriate and acceptable methods of smoothing trends in the flows and cost of housing finance has not been satisfactorily resolved and leaves the societies in an invidious position in both the public and political arenas.

The general fall in interest rates is the way forward, for what next? There are, perhaps, three keys. One is the Government's strategy in the foreign exchange markets. A second is the extent of any recovery in the domestic economy and, therefore, in the demand for bank loans. The third is the trend in the rate of inflation.

If the Government sticks with its present policy of holding sterling below what is felt to be its natural market value, the bias to short-term interest rates will continue downwards, at least, until domestic demand for money starts rising strongly or foreign confidence in sterling is greatly reduced.

The unknown at this stage is the way foreigners will view sterling if interest rates move significantly below those obtainable in other international markets. At present most key short-term investments are still offering marginally more than the equivalent in Euro-currency markets or in New York. But the margin is now extremely fine.

Should the Government decide to take rapid steps to eliminate our potential balance of payments surplus by allowing the exchange rate to float cleanly, by stimulating the economy or by liberalizing outward capital movements, the position would be rather different.

The fall in short-term rates would almost certainly be over. An upward "float" for sterling would undoubtedly be good news in terms of inflation and, therefore, long gilts. Any other policy could stop the long end of the gilt market in its tracks.

In short, the Government has some delicately balanced decisions to take this autumn.

HOW RATES HAVE MOVED

	Autumn 1976	September 1977
Bank of England minimum lending rate	15	81
Clearing banks		
deposit rate	11	3
base rate	14	7
UK Treasury bills	14.9	6.2
US Treasury bills	4.9	5.3
3-month interbank	15	61
1 year local authority bond	15	71
Building societies		
deposit rate	(12, gross) 10.15, gross	6.7
mortgage rate	123	103
War Loan	15.5	10.5
Equities	8.3	4.9

Estonia puts itself on the map

Estonia's gross industrial output. Exports went to more than 80 countries, mainly in Scandinavia, the rest of Europe and Africa. "Not so long ago",

Williams & Glyn's

Interest Rate Changes

Williams & Glyn's Bank announces that with effect from September 13th 1977 its Base Rate for advances is reduced from 8% to 7% per annum.

Interest on deposits at 7 days' notice is reduced from 4% to 3% per annum.

WILLIAMS & GLYN'S BANK LTD

FINANCIAL NEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

Stock markets

Lively trade as gilts to the fore

With equities subdued by widespread profit-taking and failing to take much comfort from the 1 per cent cut in base rates this day dealers in gains and losses—*plus* dealers said that interest rates apart, an encouraging set of wholesale prices, the return to work at Lucas, and hopes of rather better trade figures tomorrow—the market is looking for a

Up 23p last week and another 4p yesterday London & Provincial Poster has been attracting support in a thin market. The attraction is the hope that Reed International, which has 48 per cent of the equity, will tidy up the rest. The shares closed at 141p last night.

visible deficit of between £150m and £200m—all combined to bring a lively trade.

Short dates closed with gains, at best, of around half a point while the longer end was three-quarters to seven-eighths better being additionally

helped by the attractiveness of some yields. Though the FT Index closed 5.5 down to 524.3, after 522.9, dealers said the day's trading was a short-term reaction following last week's strength. The tone remained basically optimistic though the smaller investor remains a seller. It was reported that the institutions were prepared to nibble at the lower levels but not to chase prices much higher.

Though the market in general welcomed the cut in base rates by the clearing banks, worried by pressure on margins, lost ground heavily. Midland led the way down, dropping 11p to 334p while both National Westminster at 250p and Barclays at 300p were lower by 10p and Lloyds shed 7p for a finish of 142p.

As predicted here, half-time profits from Rolls-Royce Motors

did not please and the shares dipped 4p to 72p. Also in the mining sector Lucas added 4p to 336p on the return to work distributor Dorada were 4p better at 66p on pleasing profits and component maker Wilmot-Breeden rose 4p to 83p on renewed takeover talk. Associated Engineering is the favoured name. Elsewhere in the market Furness Withy dipped 6p to 306p after news of abortive merger talks with European Ferries, which themselves gained 3p to 91p on figures. Continued takeover talk had Serck another 2½ to the good at 117½p.

Late in the day gold shares met with fresh demand.

Early turnover on September 8 was £104.7m (27,064 shares). Active stocks yesterday, according to the Stock Exchange, were ICL, Shell, Tube Investments new, BOC, new, Getty and Lucas.

Rank, Plessey, BAT Dfd, GKN, BSR, House of Fraser, Grand Metropolitan, Associated Dairies

Sears has interim figures in November. They will cover the six months to July 31 last. A modest increase from £15m up to £16m is all that can be looked for but the second half year should be much more exciting. For the year to next January, profits of around £62m against £44.7m seem possible. Though Sears is not a pure retailer, the shares at 60p are starting to look cheap against other store groups in terms of dividend yield and terms of dividend yield and terms of earnings ratio.

ies, European Ferries, AP Cement, Furness Withy, Booker McConnell, Celtic Haven, Getty and Lucas.

Latest results

Company	Sales	Profits	Earnings	Div	Pay	Year's
Int'l or Fd	£m	£m	per share	pence	date	total
Amber Day Hs (F)	14.2(13.2)	1.1(0.92)	7.06(5.45)	1.2(1.1)	—	1.9(1.7)
BSR (I)	68.3(59.7)	12.1(13.0)	—	1.2(0.6)	18/11	(4.0)
City & Csm (I)	34.0(34.1)	—	0.9(0.8)	31/1	—	1.5
Dorada (F)	11.1(10.7)	—	—	4.4(3.7)	14/11	3.0(2.7)
Dixons (F)	72.5(64.0)	3.3(3.1)	38.0(30.0)	6.4(4.17)	14/11	11.6(9.9)
Dixons Tst (F)	7.7(6.3)	0.2(0.08)	2.3(2.0)	1.49(1.49)	2/10	2.3(2.3)
Dorada Hds (I)	26.8(23.5)	0.40(0.25)	—	1.65(1.65)	2/1	(4.13)
Eur Ferries (I)	50.8(30.4)	7.0(1.9)	—	1.0(0.66)	3/1	2.8(2.1)
Fed Lnd & Bld (I)	4.7(0.73)	0.41(0.39)	1.8(1.7)	0.75(0.77)	19/1	(2.0)
Glenview Inv (F)	—	2.0(1.63)	—	0.5(0.5)	—	1.6(1.40)
Fl. & F. (F)	—	0.59(0.54)	—	—	10/10	—
Fl. & F. Tst (F)	—	0.18(0.15)	—	—	—	—
Leslie & G'win (I)	—	2.4(2.3)	5.95(5.58)	1.2(1.1)	26/9	(4.06)
Maurice James (I)	2.7(2.6)	0.22(0.21)	—	0.5(0.51)	3/1	(N/A)
Merchants Tst (I)	—	1.11(1.0)	1.26(1.11)	1.0(0.8)	28/10	2.6(2.2)
Mersey Docks	30.7c (28.0c)	3.2(1.7)	16.30(5.52)	2.0(1.6)	4/11	15.0(9.0)
Merton Tst (F)	—	0.57(0.51)	—	—	—	4.7
Nat. Ldn Prop (I)	—	1.07(1.06)	4.04(3.27)	1.4(1.3)	13/10	(3.8)
Pentos (I)	18.5(16.0)	3.8(3.2)	3.83(3.33)	1.84(1.65)	—	(3.8)
Rolls-Royce M (I)	54.7(44.0)	1.35(1.18)	2.12(1.79)	1.25(1.0)	17/10	(3.69)
Scot East Inv	—	—	—	—	—	—

Dividends in this table are shown net of tax on pence per share. Elsewhere in Business News dividends are shown on a gross basis. To establish gross multiply the net dividend by 1.515. Profits are shown pre-tax and earnings are net. a forecast, b no comparison, c operating revenue, d for nine months, e dollars.

Amber hopes depend on spending upturn

By Ray Maughan

In 1970 but profitability in Fiji has increased substantially.

G & M Power Plant Co. is now playing an important part in providing U.K. earnings with profits in 1977 of £569,000.

Dividends total 6,417p per share, an increase of 10 per cent. The Company is not subject to dividend restraint.

Since 1970 the Australian group strategy (94% of turnover) has been to reduce the dependence on wholesaling and increase that on retailing—bringing the group closer to the consumer in an inflationary period. Composition of the group in New Zealand and Fiji remains as

lost from £163m to £24.1m—and took advantage of the ensuing stock appreciation relief to write-off the previous £141m goodwill total. Yet with £350,000 of the £1m Midlander development advanced by the Government and £500,000 borrowed from ICFC medium term at 13% per cent, Amber has maintained a strong pool of cash with which to pursue its take-over ambitions.

The shares dropped 2p to 20p yesterday where the P/E on stated earnings, calculated after deferred tax adjustments is 4.25. That may take some shifting—*together* with the 10.24 per cent yield on the maximum permitted dividend of 2,933p gross per share—and the market is probably waiting for proof that spending really is on an upturn.

At the same time, the rating may also need the acquisition of a good retail chain to add to the "Just Looking", "2007" and "Amber" stores.

On recent evidence, that may prove difficult, particularly if consumer spending does improve.

By Desmond Quigley

Pentos, the mini-conglomerate with interests in publishing, construction and garden equipment, increased pre-tax profits marginally in the first half of the year to end-June to £1.08m. However, the profit split between the two halves of the year have been becoming increasingly marked of late and the £10,000 opening increase is unlikely to be representative of the full-year performance.

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At the same time, the rating may also need the acquisition of a good retail chain to add to the "Just Looking", "2007" and "Amber" stores.

On recent evidence, that may prove difficult, particularly if consumer spending does improve.

The second-half will see the seasonal contribution of the group's bookshops, particularly since the group recently acquired Dilys of University Bookshop for £650,000. In the first half of the year Pentos' own bookshops only broke-even.

Sales of academic books as well as children's books and accessories in the run-up to the Christmas period are a strong influence in the second half.

Additionally, Pentos is cashing in on the Elvis Presley nostalgia boom with the publication of a magazine devoted to the late rock star. Since being released last week, the print run has been extended four times.

The development of in-store sales of greenhouses has proved beneficial with Halls having made particularly strong first-half profits.

Since the last annual report, the group has undergone some significant changes. Apart from the Dilys bookshop acquisition, which may be followed by further acquisitions in the publishing and selling field, particularly in Australia and the United States, Peptos has disposed of its 25 per cent stake in Phoenix Timber, which was not seen as fitting in with the group's building side.

Pentos has also recently negotiated medium-term finance of £2.75m to replace existing short-term borrowing which stood at £2.81m at end-June.

Pentos await upsurge in second-half

By Pentos

Amber hopes depend on spending upturn

By Pentos</p

Stock Exchange Prices

Widespread profit taking

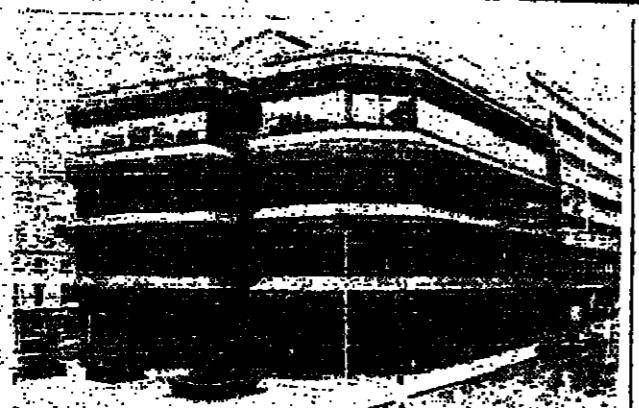
ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealing Began, Sept. 5. Dealings End, Sept. 18 & Contango Day, Sept. 19. Settlement Day, Sept. 27

Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days

Stock	High	Low	Close	Div	Vid	Yield	High	Low	Company	Price	Ch	Per cent	High	Low	Company	Price	Ch	Per cent	High	Low	Company	Price	Ch	Per cent	High	Low	Company	Price	Ch	Per cent
BRITISH FUNDS																														
100% High	100%	100%	100%				100%	100%	High Yield Company	Price	Ch	Per cent	100%	100%	High Yield Company	Price	Ch	Per cent	100%	100%	High Yield Company	Price	Ch	Per cent	100%	100%	High Yield Company	Price	Ch	Per cent
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Cash Corp	95	-1	3.2	100	100	Leisure Corp	78	-1	1.3	100	100	Long Term Corp	120	-1	0.8	100	100	Midland Corp	120	-1	0.8
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley J	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Edwards Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Flame Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Freight Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley M	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Gardiner Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	General Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Gloucester Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley P	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Gloucester Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley S	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley T	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley W	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley X	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley Y	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley Z	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley A	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley B	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley C	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley D	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley E	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley F	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley G	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley H	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley I	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley J	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley K	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley L	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley M	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley N	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley O	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley P	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley Q	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1	1.0
100% Fund	100	100	100				100	100	Crossley R	100	-1	1.0	100	100	Great Northern Corp	100	-1</td													

Commercial Property

Topping out £30m complex



Cooper House, Manchester : let to Rank Xerox (UK)

With the slow pace of new developments, topping out cere

monies have been few and far between. However, some general work has taken place, particularly which are of interest. In particular, and by far the greatest development, was the £30m Euston Square complex being developed by the British Rail Property Board, completed in 1976. It is needed by Novartis, Union

Life, Insurance Society and Pension Fund Securities Ltd, which will add about 300,000 sq ft to London's stock of offices and residential accommodation. It is four blocks of buildings, with a total of 1,000 offices, with a variety of floors.

The scheme is designed by Safford and Partners and is due for completion in stages between March and June next. The units range in size from 1,000 sq ft to 10,000 sq ft. Letting is through the British Rail Property Board and Edward Erdman.

Another was of West One, a mixed scheme being carried out by London Electric Supply Nominees in Carnaby Street, London.

The development is on a site bordered by Carnaby Street, the Royal Mail and Carnaby Street, and is due for completion next May. Designed by Douglas Marriot, Worby and Robinson and Stanley Peach and Partners, it will have a mix of ground floor and basement units which have been allocated at rents of up to £20 a sq ft. These are expected to be trading by Christmas.

The last upper floors will be let as fully conditioned office suites, one of 300 sq ft and the other of 7,800 sq ft. Above the offices will be 10 flats. Letting agents for the ground floor and shop units are Richard Ellis and Alsops for the supermarket, and Safford and Partners for the ground floor showrooms.

The new office scheme beside Camberley railway station, in Surrey, being carried out by R. N. Edwards and Partners, of Epsom, has been let to Rank Xerox (UK) in a concession with the British Rail Property Board.

Work on the building started in December. Designed by John Fraser, John Roberts and Partners, the building will provide about 14,000 sq ft of net lettable area, including 12,000 sq ft of office space, 1,000 sq ft of retail space and 1,000 sq ft of car parking. It is due for completion in the middle of next year. Letting is through Richardson and Smith of Whitley.

In Manchester, Cooper

Architects are carrying out

work on a new supermarket and shopping development at Flossgate, Whitley, to be carried out by County Properties (Gateshead) Ltd.

Designed by Trevor Wilkin

son Associates of York, the scheme will consist of a super

market with an area of 14,000 sq ft and three shops, together with a variety of seven existing properties.

The supermarket is being

let by Amos Hinton and Sons, the retailers based on Teesside, and only three of these shops remain available.

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